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ELIZABETH IN AFRICA
a new series of stories by
Florence Kilpatrick

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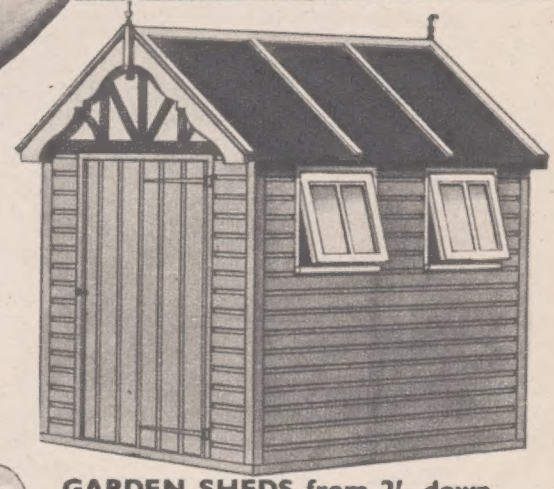

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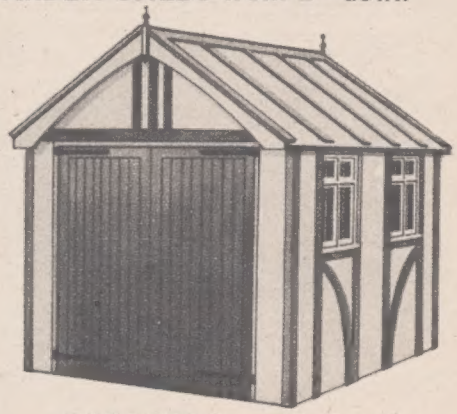

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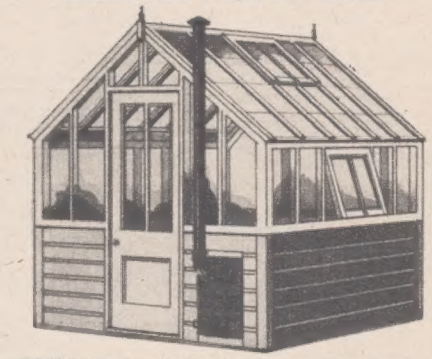

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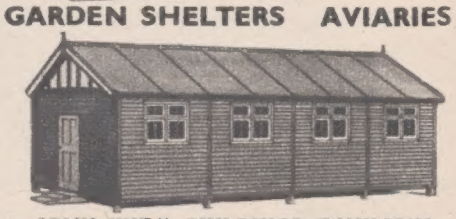

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It's first come—first served. Make sure of your "Hurricane" M.W.3 Model Monoplane by completing and posting the Final Forms below TO-DAY!

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This Form reserves a Model "M.W.3" Monoplane in your name.

I apply, in accordance with your offer, for a "Hurricane" M.W.3 Model Monoplane. Please reserve a Model Monoplane in my name, and send me my Official Privilege Voucher which entitles me to obtain it at the Special Privilege price.

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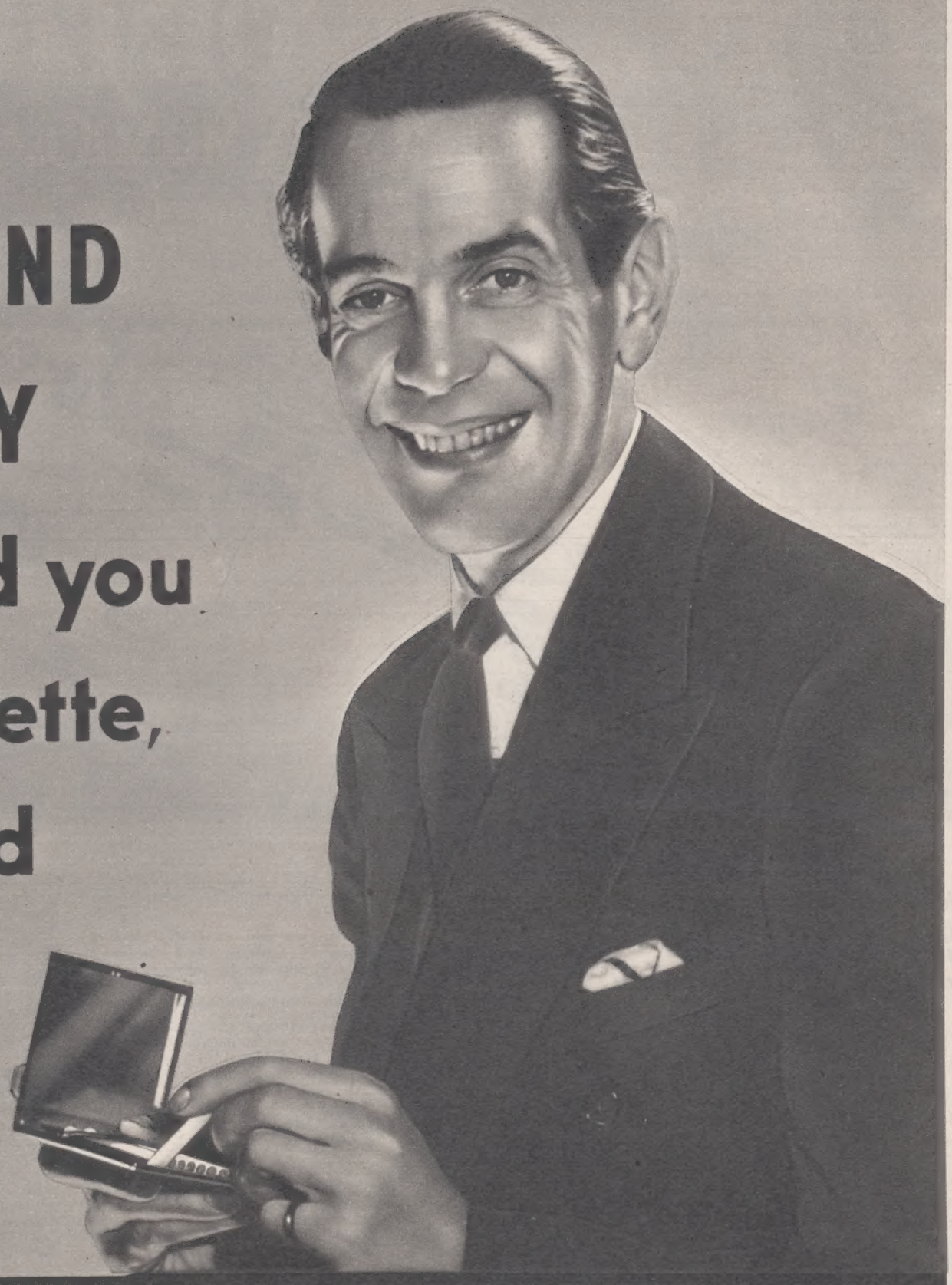

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The PASSING SHOW
No. 330. Vol. 7. JULY 16, 1938

BEGINNING
THE ADVENTURES OF
ELIZABETH IN AFRICA

JU-JU MASCOT

BY FLORENCE KILPATRICK

ILLUSTRATED BY OUR COVER ARTIST, GILBERT WILKINSON

Elizabeth, the most amusing of all cockney serving maids, finds that even a craven image can do a lot to banish boredom from the great, wide open spaces

"You lik' buy him, Memsahib? Him a Ju-Ju . . . very good specimen." "So he's a jujube, eh?" Elizabeth burst into laughter

IT stood in the dim and dusty interior of a *duka*, in the Indian quarter of Nairobi. Strange that amid a jumble of cheap jewellery, carved beads, ivories and gaily coloured silks, this alone should capture Elizabeth's interest, at sight. There was something actually repellent in the brass cast of a human head which she picked up and turned over curiously. It had a suggestion of negroid in the face, but the nose was thin, the eye-sockets enormous. The thick lips protruded over a deep carved choker and there were strangely marked branches in front of the brow. On the projecting base was a design somewhat resembling clover leaves, and the same sign appeared on the reticulated headdress.

"Clover leaves," decided Elizabeth. "This would make a lucky mascot."

Never was a girl more in need of a lucky mascot than in this frightening and strangely unreal country of East Africa, whither she had accompanied her employer and his wife in the guise of family retainer. They were taking a six months' holiday and had rented Kitambu, a tiny estate on the heights of the Kinankopf. Already the loneliness of that small holding fringing the bamboo forest, the silence, the vast horizon, were beginning to get on her nerves. She welcomed this little trip into Nairobi. If "they" had to come to Africa why didn't they spend their holiday in a town like this? There were shops, bustling streets and picture houses . . . almost like home but for the natives, the rickshaws, the heat and the dust. The suave voice of the Indian broke into her meditations.

"You lik' buy him, Memsahib? Him a Ju-Ju . . . ver' good specimen."

"So he's a jujube, eh?" Elizabeth burst into gusty laughter.

The Indian, however, looked grave. "Memsahib must not laugh at Ju-Ju. He no like it. And if Ju-Ju get angry . . ." He spread out his fat, yellow hands expressively.

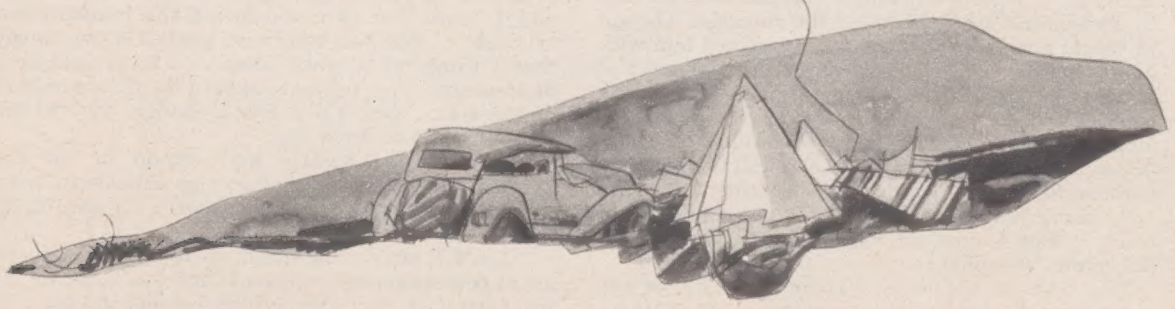
Elizabeth was impressed. She regarded the object she held in her hands in the light of a mascot and her belief in the power, the significance and efficacy of mascots was enormous. They ranked even higher than her faith in the Signs, namely, ill-luck in seeing the new moon through glass, spilling salt, crossing knives, sneezing before breakfast, walking under ladders; or luck in such things as black cats, spiders, clover, putting on your stockings the wrong side and so on. Mascots she had in plenty which she wore on her person, or carried in her hand-bag. But the one the Indian had called a Ju-Ju was different from anything she had ever seen. It held her with a queer kind of fascination.

"'Ow much?" she demanded.

"Fifteen rupees, Memsahib."

"Wot! Fifteen roopees!" exclaimed Elizabeth, translating this sum into what she termed "real money." "Come again . . . I ain't 'aving any."

Oddly enough, the Indian refused to budge from this figure; nor did he press his customer to buy. Yet, ten minutes later, Elizabeth emerged into the glare of the noonday sun carrying the Ju-Ju, wrapped in paper, beneath her arm.



She felt immensely thrilled by her purchase. This, she was sure, was going to be the luckiest mascot she had ever possessed. Wasn't the clover leaf especially lucky for her? It was after she had found the four-leafed clover that she had met Bert and walked out with him for five months; he was even talking of getting married when they changed his beat. Yes, indeed; the clover leaf was her Sign.

It was not until two days after she had returned

to Kitambu that she displayed the treasured mascot to her mistress.

"I bought it in Nighrobey," she said, with pride. "An' I paid fifteen roopees for it."

"Fifteen rupees for a hideous thing like that!" Netta Warrington picked up the Ju-Ju and examined it with an air of distaste. "Why did you allow yourself to be cheated?"

"Cheated, 'm? It was a lot o' money but it's worth it if it's goin' to be my lucky mascot."

Netta shrugged her shoulders. "You ought to have more sense than to believe in such rubbish. They don't mean a thing."

Elizabeth gasped. "Mascots don't mean anything?"

"Of course not. Only foolish, superstitious people . . . like the ignorant natives, for example, have faith in them."

Elizabeth was touched on the raw. It was as though a blow had been aimed at her most sacred beliefs. She drew up her lank form with dignity.

"Them as scoffs at mascots, don't believe in luck and orl that, lives to regret it," she pronounced. Too indignant to trust herself to speak further on the subject she strode out, forgetting in her agitation to take the Ju-Ju. Netta was still examining it when Henry entered.

"Hello . . . that's a queer-looking object!" he exclaimed.

"Elizabeth's latest mascot . . . guaranteed to bring good luck and protect the owner against evil!" his wife replied, laughing.

He took it from her and turned it over curiously. "It's a most unusual thing . . . looks Egyptian, with a negroid cast. I'd like Megan to see this when he comes this evening."

Shawn Megan was their nearest neighbour; although he lived ten miles away on the other side of the bamboo forest, he often dropped in to see the new arrivals at Kitambu and a great friendship had sprung up between them. He had dwelt for twenty-five years in the country, studying its history and languages; the subject absorbed him to the exclusion of all others.

As they sat on the veranda that evening, lingering over the sundowner, Henry touched on the subject of the Ju-Ju. Megan took it in his hands and glanced at it—at first casually and then with a strange eagerness. He turned it this way and that; put one or two sharp questions as to how it came to Kitambu. At last he said, in tones that were unusually excited.

"Do you realise the importance of this image . . . have you observed the signs at the base and on the headdress?"

"Elizabeth said they were clover leaves."

"They represent the three-tonged flame. Tradition has it that it is the sign of the lost Mtangulizi . . . that is the native word for Leader tribe. They were said to be highly civilised . . . perhaps an offshoot of the ancient Egyptians who came down to work the soda lake at Magadi. The legend runs that they discovered gold and precious stones in the country and accumulated vast wealth. But the whole tribe disappeared about the time of the eruption of Mount Elgon."

"You mean they were destroyed?"

"No. There are indications that they took flight before the actual eruption of the volcano. They carried with them their accumulated store of wealth. Somewhere it must still exist and the natives call that Thahabu, the Place of Gold."

"What an amazing story," said Netta, in an awed voice. "And to think the Ju-Ju is linked up with it." She began to examine it. "The headdress is hollow . . . but something seems to be wedged there."

"I can see it!" almost shouted Megan. Carefully he probed the hollow headpiece; a small cylindrical object fell out. "A document of some kind, which has been wrapped in dried skin to preserve it. Shall I open it?"

"We ought to ask Elizabeth's permission," put in Netta. "Remember, the Ju-Ju is her property."

Megan ignored this. Excitedly, he took off the outer covering. A parchment, yellowed with age was revealed. Megan smoothed it out with a hand that trembled.

"It looks like a plan," said Henry.

"It is a plan," declared Megan, after a close inspection of the parchment. "A plan that will lead us to the hiding-place of the lost Mtangulizi tribe. I know there have been expeditions in search of the tribe and only one is said to have been successful. It was made by a Portuguese about two hundred years ago, but he died of fever on the return journey and nothing is known of his experiences. But it was always believed he had made a plan that was afterwards stolen from him. This . . ." dramatically he held aloft the parchment—"is undoubtedly that plan. Probably he brought the Ju-Ju from the hiding-place of the Mtangulizi."

The chief rose to his magnificent height and came slowly down the steps from his throne. "Pleased to meet you, stranger," he said, holding out his hand. "W'y 'e torks American," gasped Elizabeth

"It seems a fantastic story," put in Netta. "And what can we do about it?"

"Do about it . . . *do about it* . . ." reiterated Megan, striking the table with his fist. "We must set out on this expedition without any loss of time. You'll want me. I know the country and conditions. I'll equip the expedition. God . . . what a piece of colossal luck for us all . . . a chance to make ourselves fabulously wealthy . . . to get the spice of adventure that all men dream of——"

"Such an expedition would be a big undertaking . . . it seems too wild and fantastic to be considered seriously," interrupted Henry. Perturbed, he rose to his feet and walked beyond the veranda. Though he would not admit it, Megan had infected him with his enthusiasm. He was stirred by the thought of action. As his eyes rested on the far distant peak of Kilimanjaro—the Mountain of the Spirit—a longing arose in him to know something of Africa beyond this familiar stretch of veldt and the shadowy bamboo forest. He heard Netta speaking.

"I think it's a wonderful idea," she said, breathlessly. "But I must go, too . . . it wouldn't be too dangerous, would it?"

Megan shook his head. "There shouldn't be any more dangers than one encounters on an ordinary *safari* through the game reserve.

"Dinner's ready. Shall I dish up, 'm?" Elizabeth had appeared on the veranda. Her face wore a look of silent suffering engendered by cooking over a wood fire with the aid of a raw house-boy who was prone to snatch tit-bits from the cooking-pots the moment her gaze was removed from them. She now advanced to the table and looked curiously at the plan. "I hope you'll excuse me, sir," she went on, addressing Megan, "but I was standin' at the kitchen door just to get the smoke out of me eyes, and I heard wot you said about the treasure and orl that . . . you was talkin' so loud. I'd like to say that I think it's a grand ideer . . . to go in search of treasure. I've orlways wanted to do somethink of the sort. And it'll make a change, too, to get away from 'ere for a bit."

Henry turned swiftly and strode up to the veranda. "Of course *you* can't go, Elizabeth, even if we do. It's out of the question . . . absurd, in fact."

"Can't I, sir?" She lifted up the Ju-Ju with an air of possessiveness. "Then I 'ope you'll excuse me mentionin' it, but this jujube belongs to me. So does that there plan Mr. Megan was talking about

. . . an' if I don't feel like givin' the plan up . . . w'y nobody can go!"

There was a tense silence, then Megan burst into gusty laughter.

"You're right, Elizabeth. Of course you must go. And I hope you'll give us permission to accompany you." He picked up his glass and held it aloft. "Here's to Elizabeth . . . the most important member of the expedition . . . and here's luck to the treasure-seekers."

Elizabeth, beaming with satisfaction, considered the Ju-Ju affectionately. She had been right. It was a lucky mascot after all. Then, as she regarded it closer, she had a queer illusion. It seemed that the immense and sinister eyes of the Ju-Ju had turned red . . . as if suffused in blood.

Elizabeth, sitting on her camp bed, beneath the mosquito net, stared into the intense blackness of the African night through the open flap of the tent. Round the camp fire the bearers were grouped . . . stretched in slumber, oblivious of the long-drawn cries of the hyenas from the hills, the "yapping" of the jackals, and the purring howl of an occasional leopard which rustled through the elephant grass not a hundred yards from the clearing.

"Fair gives me the creeps . . . makes you wonder wot *is* goin' on in the dark," she murmured.

For many days now, Elizabeth had begun to wonder if she were passing through a strange dream, from which the shrill call of the alarm clock would recall her to ordinary, everyday life. She had set out in the highest of spirits, had plunged into the bustle of departure, even helping in the checking of the baggage—the tents, camp beds, folding tables, canvas baths, the stacking the box-body of the car with tinned goods, packing the medicine chest. She had donned slacks and gum boots and pulled a terai over her pert brow, secretly revelling in the outfit.

There had been wonderful sights en route. The Great Rift Valley, with its stretches of mountains and hills, extinct volcanoes, towering escarpments. They had glimpsed buffalo, zebra, impala, kangaroo. "It was as good as bein' at the Zoo," Elizabeth had declared. "Only you don't have to pay to see the animals."

But the only time she expressed awe was before the vast soda lake at Nakuru, with the snouts of hippo appearing above its iridescent waters.

"I never thort soda began like this," she murmured. "I shall orlways think o' this when I use soda for washin' up again."

Then another dazzling thought presented itself . . . she would never need to do such domestic work as washing up, in the future. She was going to find treasure that would make her rich for the rest of her life . . . have jewellery, furs and a red moty car.

It was a rapturous picture, glowing with possibilities. Yet, as the days wore on, some of her elation faded. She became dimly aware of impending danger.

This was solely due to the sinister presence of Megan's *syce*, Tankawizi. From the commencement of the trip she had been aware of the native's glance, turned on the Ju-Ju with a keen, covetous expression. For she had refused to be parted with it, carrying it with her during the day and standing it beside her camp bed as she slept. The natives called her mascot Shetani, meaning "devil," and—as some of them seemed afraid of it, Netta, after urging Elizabeth in vain to have it packed away in the baggage, presented her with a chintz bag to keep it covered. Elizabeth now carried the Ju-Ju with ease, strapped to her waist belt.

"Though it really is rather absurd to carry it like that, Elizabeth," Netta remarked.

"I've a reason for not letting it out o' my sight, 'm," was her cryptic reply. She knew enough of the cunning peculiar to the native, to be certain that if the Ju-Ju were ever left unguarded, Tankawizi would obtain possession of it. Yet why should he want it . . . and why should the other natives roll their eyes and tremble with fear at the sight of her mascot?

These thoughts haunted her as she sat up in bed staring into the night. Elizabeth had not escaped the plague of insects inseparable from such a journey . . . the enormous stinging ants, the flies, which had fastened on her joyfully. At the moment, she owed her wakefulness to the torments of a jigger in her toe. She observed, however, that Tankawizi was also awake. He sat upright while his companions slept. It was an eerie sight. The flickering flames threw into relief the background of giant trees, and intensified the awesome darkness beyond; the boys rolled in their blankets, feet stretched close to the blaze, native-wise, and that great, muscular figure sitting erect, with hands folded on his chest, so still that he might have been carved out of black marble. Despite Tankawizi's repose, Elizabeth was aware that his head was turned in the direction of her tent; that he was keenly alert. At last, very slowly, he rose to his feet; the light of the fire fell on the deadly panga which he unfastened from the leather belt at his waist. Then stealthily, like an animal creeping through the concealing elephant grass, he made his way to Elizabeth's tent.

A cold shiver went down her spine, a prickling feeling over her scalp. "An' to think if it hadn't been for this blessed jigger, I might have been asleep and murdered in me bed," she reflected. For now she had no doubt of Tankawizi's intention. He meant to kill her and get possession of the Ju-Ju.

Too paralysed with fear to cry out, Elizabeth's sharp wits did not for a moment desert her. Groping under the mosquito net she sought for the Ju-Ju . . . but her hand came into contact with the alarm clock. It had always been Elizabeth's habit to carry

(*please turn over*)

her alarm clock no matter where she travelled. Its clarion call had a quality that was as deafening as a burglar alarm and as enduring as a fire engine in action. It roused her effectively from her deepest slumber, when—as on the present journey—the screaming parrots and chattering monkeys left her undisturbed. Her fingers now closed round the alarm clock. The camp fire was blotted out as Tankawizi's great form loomed in the tent opening. He seemed to sway backwards like an animal going back on its haunches before springing.

"Oh, lor, w'y did I leave my happy home," thought Elizabeth, as a cold sweat broke out on her brow. "And if I don't act quick I never will see 'ome again, that's certain." With the desperation born of terror, she turned the hour hand of the clock until it came to the time for which it was set; then, as it bellowed forth a reveille, Elizabeth flung it with all her force at Tankawizi's approaching figure.

He fled with a yell that awoke the whole camp. Immediately there was uproar, shouting, questioning, violent activity. Elizabeth sobbed out her story and an instant search was made for Tankawizi; but he had disappeared in the darkness and, although the boys were sent out in all directions, there was no trace of him. Megan, fingering his *kiboko* and swearing vengeance, insisted on the search being renewed before they set out again the following morning. Elizabeth, particularly, was relieved that he could not be found. The incident had shaken her considerably. After this, her entire days were full of apprehension concerning the bearers and anticipation of wild animals that might crash through the tangle of creeping things all around them; while every night before retiring she searched diligently for snakes beneath the bed.

They had now arrived in a wilder territory. Plains and belts of scrub and bush gave place to hills and almost impenetrable woods. One day, when they halted before a steep escarpment, Megan, after a prolonged examination of his map and diagrams, announced that the next part of the route must be negotiated on foot.

"Henry and I will go on alone first and explore what there is ahead," he explained.

There was a hitch to this plan. For Elizabeth resolutely objected to being left behind. The memory of the treacherous Tankawizi still haunted her. She felt that they had not seen the last of him.

But in the ensuing march, Elizabeth forgot danger in discomfort. The trail lay through the gloom of a bamboo forest, which meant being persistently caught in the entanglements of wiry creeping plants, or stumbling over half concealed stumps of cane. The flies were unusually irritating and the giant stinging nettles and shrubs with spikes like razors further tormented the party. But, for the time at least, these miseries were forgotten when, emerging from the bamboo forest they unexpectedly came upon the swamp garden. They all paused spell-bound, for they were looking upon one of the wonders of the world.

The bed of this swamp, composed entirely of the decayed vegetation of many centuries, went to a depth of nearly one hundred feet. Megan explained that to venture into it would mean certain death, for one would sink into its soft mossy depths to suffocation. But—as if it were a snare for the unwary—it was a garden of exquisite beauty, a blaze of strange tropical plants, all of enormous size, great beds of begonias, giant lobelias, climbing plants splashing the trees with vivid colour, scarlet cannas so intense in colour as to look like living flame. There was something primeval about this riot of vegetation and absence of any other form of life, suggesting that remote age before the advent of animals and men.

It was Elizabeth who broke the silence that had fallen upon the party.

"Well . . . that beats anythink I've ever seen at Kew Gardens," she commented. Perhaps she had not heard Megan's warning; perhaps the wild masses of colour were more than she could resist. Murmuring, "I just carnt believe them red flowers is real," she darted forward, hand outstretched.

"Stop, Elizabeth . . . you mustn't go there," gasped Netta, catching hold of her. But Elizabeth had already lost her footing on that treacherous surface. She sank, bearing Netta with her.

Instantly, Henry and Megan plunged to their aid, just as if they were diving to rescue them from drowning.

It all happened with incredible swiftness. In a flash they were falling . . . falling, and the earth seemed to have opened and swallowed them up. Elizabeth's last thought as she fell as that her mascot had failed her. Then, oddly enough, that sinking into the abyss ceased abruptly . . . and she was still alive. She was lying on a grassy slope, bruised, half suffocated, covered with leaf mould, twigs, her mouth full of moss and soft earth . . . but able to breathe. She sat up and saw the others choking and coughing, almost blinded and miraculously unhurt.

For a long time they were all too shaken to speak. Even the volatile Elizabeth was stunned into silence. It was Megan who got to his feet first and stared about him.

"Good God! Look at that!" he exclaimed, harshly.

He was considering the totally unexpected scene that spread before them. Below, lay a fertile valley pierced by a winding river, the banks of which were shaded by orange groves and clumps of tropical palms. But strangest of all were the buildings on the hillside and at the distant end of the valley. They seemed to have been formed of enormous natural stalactites and stalagmites of translucent colouring and carved into forms so gracious and delicate as to give an impression of almost unearthly beauty. This idea also struck Elizabeth, for she said, in awed tones:

"P'raps we're orl dead and this is Heaven!"

"Not with my shins aching like this," said Henry, ruefully.

"I'm so afraid . . . I wonder what's going to happen to us next," babbled Netta, who was sick and trembling.

"We're being watched," said Henry and instinctively lowered his voice; in that rarefied air it seemed to carry for miles.

On the other side of the valley forms of men had appeared. There was much running to and fro . . . evidences of hasty conference between them. Then about a dozen of them, with shields and tall spears, formed a line and began to move slowly across the valley.

As they came nearer, the menace in their attitude was evident. Involuntarily, Megan and Henry rose to their feet as if to shield the women. As they came within hailing distance, Megan raised his hand to parley; but the men continued their advance.

They were good looking, with straight noses, full lips and black hair; their slender, bronze bodies were dignified by the leopard skins they wore and the broad, shining bracelets on their forearms.

As if forgetting the imminent danger, Megan began to speak in a quick excited whisper to Henry. "Those shields . . . their ornaments . . . they're all of gold . . . and do you see the sign on the shields . . . the sign of the three-tongued flame . . . they're the Mtangulizi."

In his exultation he scarcely observed that the men had now halted within a few yards of them and, with a sinister gesture, lowered their spears. Elizabeth saw it and shuddered.

"Oh, lor . . . we're for it," she muttered. Frantically she seized the Ju-Ju and unwrapped its coverings. "Look, 'ere, if you're any good as a mascot, now's the time to do your stuff, see. Be a sport an' do us orl a good turn by gettin' us out o' this."

"Nothing but a miracle will get us out of this," said Netta, whose teeth were chattering.

And the miracle happened. For the men stared at Elizabeth and the spears dropped from their hands. They turned, muttered to each other, then with one accord flung themselves down, their foreheads touching the ground in an attitude of worship before the lank form of Elizabeth. At length they rose, bowed three times, pointed in the direction of the valley and began to descend the slope. The others followed, scrambling with difficulty down the steep rocky path, tangled with undergrowth. Reaching the valley, they found cultivated land, orange groves, flowering trees, exotic fruits. Their escort now led them to what they later discovered was the reception hall of the chief.

It was stalactiform, the walls being exquisitely carved from the natural stone which was delicately coloured and translucent like alabaster. At the end of the hall was a heavy door which was flung open as they approached. The apartment they now entered was awe-inspiring in its grandeur. Its ceiling was lofty and arched like a cathedral and on the throne, which was carved out of ivory, sat the figure of a man. His olive face was handsome and forbidding, the wide bracelets he wore on his forearms gave him a fiercely barbaric appearance. At the sight of the party, the chief rose to his magnificent height and came slowly down the steps from his throne.

"Pleased to meet you, stranger," he said, holding out his hand.

"W'y, 'e torks American," gasped Elizabeth.

"May I ask how you acquired this language, sir?" said Megan.

"Sure. Three years ago, there comes to this valley a guy by the name of Rusty Brown . . . called himself a Yank . . . came in a 'plane . . . crashed. When he foist arrived our boys wanted to put him on the spot . . . then I have just one lovely idea. I make the white guy teach us his lingo. For three years he has been teaching us . . . now we speak it poifectly."

The sight of this dignified warrior speaking American slang in a grandiose manner struck them all as being the strangest thing they had encountered since they had set out on the expedition. Now, observing their dishevelled appearance, the chief went on:

"I guess you feel like a wash and brush up. We'll talk later . . . now my folks will look after you." Looking at Elizabeth he inclined himself towards her with respect. "The wise guys of our tribe promised that one day the Chief Sacred Ju-Ju, stolen from the Temple, would be returned to us by a dame from the white-face tribe. That is the reason you are all spared."

Elizabeth turned and regarded Netta. In her eyes was the light of triumph. "P'raps you'll say *now*, 'm, that there's such a thing as lucky mascots . . . that it isn't orl a lot o' rubbish!" The tensity of her tones showed how deeply Netta's remark had rankled. But she had got her own back now. With dignity she followed the attendant who had been allotted to her, a girl who wore sandals and a long white linen garment resembling the *kanzu* of the African house-boy. She led the way through many rooms into a vast apartment with a broad, low bed carved out of mahogany and inlaid with gold. It was spread with leopard skins and canopied in silk. There were divans piled with cushions, a magnificently carved armoire. Elizabeth looked round and gasped.

"Say, is this my bedroom?" she demanded.

"Yep," replied the attendant, who also spoke American "poifectly." "Our orders is that you've to have the best we got in this lil' burg."

"That's nice of you . . . though it does seem a bit too much—like goin' to bed in the Albert 'All. Why must I 'ave the best?"

The girl nodded at the Ju-Ju Elizabeth was carrying. "You own the Sacred Ju-Ju . . . you gotta be specially honoured, see?"

Elizabeth preened herself. "My lucky mascot again. Wot sort of 'onours do you mean?"

"You've got to be fed on the milk of the Sacred Goat——"

Elizabeth looked disappointed. "Is that orl?"

"You're going to be given fifty of the Sacred Bulls.

"Not me . . . I'm skeered even o' cows."

"Three lambs sired by the Sacred Ram——"

"Looks as though I'm goin' to run a Sacred Butchers' shop now I've come 'ere," interrupted Elizabeth, nettled. "Wot do I want with bulls an' rams an' lambs?"

"Aw, don't you get me? They're to be sacrificed foist."

"Sacrificed *first*?"

"Sure. Then it's your turn."

A strange, cold feeling was creeping down Elizabeth's spine.

"W-why *me*?"

"Aw, haven't I been telling you. It's because you're the owner of the Sacred Ju-Ju. It's the greatest honour you can have to be sacrificed to it. You gotta choice of deaths, too."

"Thank you for nothink," moaned Elizabeth, faintly. And to think that barely ten minutes ago she had been boasting about her faith in mascots! Then she had an inspiration.

"Listen . . . I got something to tell you," she said solemnly. "Go back to your boss an' tell him I ain't the owner of the Ju-Ju no longer. Anyone can 'ave it for me though I did pay fifteen roopees for it." She stepped out on the balcony which led from the apartment and, with all her might, hurled the sacred Ju-Ju away; it fell somewhere out of sight.

Elizabeth gave a sigh of relief. "So that's that. No more signs and omens for me. I don't believe in luck. And I'll never 'ave a mascot again; no, not if I live to be an 'undred!"

NEXT WEEK

Elizabeth with a Hangover

The glamour of killing passes. The race of men who go out to hunt and kill for love of adventure and even butchery, is dying out. In their place there comes a generation wishing only to understand the ways of nature

BY S. L. BENSUSAN

PICTURES BY ERIC J. HOSKING

On the left is a picture of the hide erected by Mr. Hosking to photograph the pigeon and on the right is the snap he obtained. A mother feeding one of her young

CAMERAS CATCH UP WITH NATURE

I RETURNED, in middle-age, to a village that was my playground. The very old folk had gone, the middle-aged were elderly, the young married folk middle-aged. One of these, the good-hearted, hard-working wife of an agricultural labourer and mother of a young family, explained how her children had gone out into the world. "We put Fred with Master Blades, the butcher," she remarked. "He was allus so fond of animals!"

It may be that Fred had much in common with the average sportsman, the man who hunts the red deer, the fox, or the otter and shoots, between the beginning of October and end of January, hundreds of pheasants that have been hatched under domestic hens, reared in coops, fed by hand and not taken to the woods until they are nearly able to perch.

All these beasts and birds have much the same chance as the sheep, pigs and bullocks that were brought into Mr. Blades' yard, and their destruction is associated with a minimum of skill.

Grant that the harbourer on Exmoor, the Master and the huntsman who have the packs in their keeping, must have real knowledge of woodcraft and the ways of hunted animals, the rank and file of their followers, particularly those who are not born countrymen, are merely able to ride. That is the measure of their capacity. A good rider always commands respect; that respect is not increased by reason of the destruction of defenceless animals.

Years ago I went with a man who was "a mighty hunter before the Lord" in pursuit of a great wild boar whose track we had found in the Argan Forest. The hunt took three days. The solitary tusker was tracked by a pack of mongrel hounds, and he attempted in many cunning ways to baffle his enemy.

He would travel a mile or two with a herd of wild boar, he would wade up or down a stream; he would take shelter in well-nigh impenetrable thorn bush, but the hunter had copied the shape and size of his tracks in a book he carried for the purpose, and no boars have feet exactly alike.

So it happened that early on the third morning when the jackals had ceased to bark and the hyenas to howl round the *ensala* that had held our tent, the pack marked him to an accessible spot. He made a fine fight, that misshapen beast with great tusks (now in my desk) and fierce little eyes; he laid out three of his pursuers.

Then the huntsman raised his rifle, gave a shrill whistle so that the dogs immediately fell off, and there was a sharp crack. The tusker rolled over, made one or two convulsive movements and lay dead.

"A fine beast," said the hunter, as we walked to the spot where his blood stained the brown earth, "but a boar doesn't have a fair chance against the rifle. If I had missed him and you could not have mended my blunder, things might have been different."

There was an element of risk, just enough to redeem the hunt, but in our country nothing that runs or flies threatens its persecutors. This knowledge may be responsible for a certain change in the outlook of many men who, years ago, pursued all game and are now content to study and to understand it.

The glamour of killing passes. The race of men who go out into the wilds and hunt not for the pot or for profit but for genuine love of adventure, tends to die out.

No longer is there any *kudos* for the man who brings home trophies that giraffe, hippopotamus and zebra have supplied. Even lion hunting may be a tame affair, and it is the desire for praise that accounts for a lot of the murder described as sport.

But apart from the wish to gratify human vanity, there is among men and women, boys and girls, a keen desire to understand the ways of life followed by beast and bird; to study both in their habit as they live.

Down to comparatively few years ago there would appear to have been no method open to people to do this, but to-day the camera with the telephoto lens and the cine-camera with its continuous pictures have completely changed our outlook.

The world goes in its millions to the cinema to enjoy wild life almost as much as the old-time sportsman would do when he took his life in his hands to untravelled lands. It has been my privilege to get a few glimpses of big game, but never in my life have I seen anything to equal the cinema-photograph of a tiger coming down to drink at a river. It was unforgettable.

To-day, thanks to the camera and the enormous development of "hides" it is possible for any inteliigent photographer to study the intimate home life of the wild and as that study grows the desire to destroy diminishes. The skin of bird and beast, the shell of the egg, are such poor, perishable things by the side of the photographic record of the living creature.

Have you ever paused to think that if the pheasant, partridge, fox, deer, or otter instead of flying, or running away from us, would come up and claim our friendship and protection, there would be a complete slump in the cartridge trade?

It is the fear of wild life that is its undoing; they seek to get away, and we try to prevent them. Only a few years ago the man who went out hunting with a camera was an object of ridicule; to-day he is respected by many and tolerated by all. Chances are that as the years pass his ranks will grow and those of the "sportsmen" will be reduced.

This will not be due only to the spread of humanitarian instincts, though such instincts have a big and valuable part to play. It will be due also to the hard fact that sport in this country is becoming more and more difficult and expensive; more and more dependent on a large bank balance, on expanding markets and a buoyant Stock Exchange.

Before the war, agricultural wages were half, or less than half, of what they are to-day and these prices found their reflection on the wage sheet of the keeper and his staff. To-day, it is not easy to find beaters. When found they are no longer cheap. Even the price of cartridges has gone up. A man must be rich if he is to run a shoot on his own account, much richer than he had to be before he was faced with a five-shilling income tax, super-tax and death duties.

Syndicates are to be met in every county to-day, but they are not improving sport. Members must pay a lot of money because expenses are high; secondly, they want all they can get and consequently it becomes hard to keep up a good stock. Anybody with sure sight and the use of his limbs can learn to shoot. If he has a gun fitted by a good maker and goes to one of the sporting parks he can learn to kill anything that runs or flies; but this knowledge, though it may fit him for a syndicate will not make a sportsman.

It is not, therefore, surprising that the camera should be challenging blood sports. It provides adventure, exercise, thrills and permanent records.

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DEAD MAN'S TALE

SHORT SHORT STORY COMPLETE ON THIS PAGE

BY W. J. ELTON

ILLUSTRATED BY ERIC PARKER

He tore the print impatiently from Cassim's fingers. "You've been wastin' our time, Doc. There's nothin' here"

HOW I came to be in that district I can't tell you. A doctor with any sense would have held hard to his practice in England. Thoughts of other lands, of a grudged existence where strength and endurance have precedence over professional distinction—these he should regard with the amused tolerance of a Shaw tilting his beard over the essays of a schoolgirls' magazine.

But there it is. I hadn't any sense. I found myself in America. I found myself called "doc" instead of "doctor." I found myself in that humourless land where the prairie merges with the desert, where the "flora" consists of a few crumbling blades of grass—where you see dust and breathe dust and eat dust, until your very mind, under the slavery of idleness and the monotony of that ironed-out landscape, crumbles into a powder that needs but a word, a lifted finger, a thimbleful of liquor to explode it.

I sat, that night, with little Cassim—"Trigger-box" Cassim, who combined a hard and violent life in the prairie with a boyish love of photography. Photography, in fact, had brought us together. In those parts science is respected only when it yanks a bullet out of a man's blistered hide, or brings renewed life to a string of sick horses; photography—that's a girl's game, a despised game. In me, Cassim had found the only man (with the exception of Joel) who had taken any interest in his pans of solutions and his enormous black "trigger-box."

We sat in his shack. We warmed our hands at his stove and we had come to the point of licking our lips at the thought of a can of tea, when the door burst open and the stove seemed to leap with its flame.

Peg-leg Dawson stood in the doorway.

Peg-leg Dawson was respected in Conway Camp. Even I respected him, although I had, at any time, more than a reasonable chance of sending him to the devil with an injection. He rode a horse like a maniac, in spite of the wooden spar that served as his left leg, and he drew a gun as readily as a city clerk draws a pension.

"Hello," grinned Cassim. "Come on in."

Dawson stood grimly in the dim light of Cassim's lamp, with the dust streaking like a blast of powdered ashes through the doorway. The sheriff and his men came crowding behind him, men with rough shirts and vividly coloured neckerchiefs, trousers streaked with the sweat of horses and the red dust that made water more precious than gold in that land of waterless gullies.

"Sure, I'm comin' in, Cassim. We're all comin' in. There're two kinds of coyote me and the boys like dealin' with personal—water thieves and friendly kind of cusses who go shootin' men plumb in the back."

Twenty great carcases in a tiny room, angry faces, closed fists—those were all good reasons for Cassim and I to come struggling to our feet.

"Listen, Cassim," began Sheriff Miers. "Is this your trigger-box?" He seized an enormous, black box from the stretched hand of Joe Long and planted it on the table.

"That's it," nodded Cassim. "That's my camera. What of it?"

"This of it," growled Dawson, his wooden leg thumping like a slow hammer against the boards as he pushed his way to the lamplight. "You shot my brother—plumb in the back. My brother Joel. We just found him—out there by the door of his shack, down in the dust. . . . Reckon you must have been in a hurry, Cassim. We found your camera inside."

Cassim gaped at me. I gaped at Cassim.

"Joe Long," thumbed the Sheriff, "sez you figured to go up to Joel's place 's'afternoon to take a picher of that new bronc he was predictin' such things for."

Cassim ran a hand down his nose. Joel was dead. . . I could see him blinking, trying to believe it, trying to realise the meaning of the charge made against him. "So I did," he nodded, "but m' horse fell lame. I couldn't get up to Joel's place. I never been near him!" He stared at Dawson, stared stupidly. "As for m' camera—why, I took that up there last night. I was takin' stores up to Joel's place, so I took m' camera with me, thinkin' to go straight on 's'afternoon when I'd finished m' day's ridin'. But m' horse fell lame. I never went. I've been around here all day—around home."

He couldn't prove it. He knew he couldn't prove it. Nobody had seen him at home that day; nobody had seen him taking his camera to Joel's shack the previous evening.

He licked his lips. The silence, the grim set of each jaw, made his position plain to him—plain to me. I'd seen one lynching.

But quarrels, battles, the sound of barking guns—those things had always been poison to Cassim. What reason, I asked, had Cassim to go killing Joel Dawson?

The Sheriff answered. "You'd best keep out of this, doc. You don't know the facts of the case. Joel had a tidy cache of dollars hidden under the boards of his bunk. We found the cans and we found the holes he'd dug. Maybe Cassim knew it. Cassim was his friend and it's more'n likely he'd go tellin' him." He paused to jerk his head violently in the direction of Joel's distant hut. "Joel's bunk's been torn to pieces, doc. There ain't no cache now."

"Then you can stand me on m' head! You can search the whole durn place! You can have up the boards——"

"Listen, Cassim. You may be a fool to go takin' pichers, but you'd have to be a worse fool to go hidin' the stuff where we could lay eyes on it!"

Cassim made no answer. The breathless quality of his silence made me curious. I turned my head. He was staring at the table, where his camera lay like a brick of sun-baked mud in the lamplight. He bent forward. He seized his camera. He turned it over.

"Last night," he jerked out, "Joe Long saw me loading this camera with a new film—didn't you Joe?"

"What of it?"

"It was dark then. I couldn't have taken any pichers that night, could I?"

Joe Long shook his head.

"Any picher taken on this film," hammered Cassim, "must have been taken to-day, since you saw me loading it. That's sense. When I last saw this box I had the film all set at number one, ready for Joel's picher. The trigger was up. Now it's down. Somebody's taken a picher. Somebody who went up to Joel's place—the man who killed Joel Dawson."

For a moment Cassim's words had the effect of a flashlight. The uproar died. Supposing Joel, in Cassim's absence, had persuaded some other visitor to take that photograph? Joel had wanted one picture, one only—one of his horse and his corral, and of himself in particular as he stood beside it—a photograph that he, himself, could never have taken. Had the killer taken it? Joel had been shot in the back. Was it unlikely that the killer had humoured Joel for the sake of that opportunity?

But the silence passed. The argument meant nothing to the men hustling each other in that crowded room.

"What's the use, anyway?" roared Dawson. "Even if there is a picher, what's it goin' to show us? The killer? Would the killer take a picher showin' us his own face? No! It'll show us just Joel and his bronc. Cassim went up there. Cassim took the picher. Cassim was the killer. What's the sense in dawdlin'? Move some, Sheriff!"

I reached for the camera. Luckily the pans were ready to hand and I took the risk and strengthened the solution to hasten the development.

"You'd best wait, Sheriff."

The voice of a "doc" counts for more than that of a rider and a hush came over the room.

I whipped the red hood over Cassim's lamp. I opened the camera and tore out the negative.

But I had no hope. The men would never wait. And if they waited, what would they see? A photograph of Joel and his horse, Joel and his corral—nothing more! A photograph that Cassim himself could have taken.

And so it was. So, at least, it seemed. The image lifted itself slowly from the dusk of the negative. There it stood, cold and grey and ghostly, the useless tableau that I had feared, the tableau of Joel by the fence of his corral, with his bronco beside him.

And then the breath left my body and the blood tingled, and I widened my eyes, as I saw the ghost still rising.

I fixed the negative. I washed it. I took out a strip of magnesium and made a print. I fixed that. I handed it to Cassim. "The man who used your camera. The man who killed Joel Dawson."

The blood came rushing to Cassim's face.

"What's showin'?" growled the Sheriff. "Let's see." He tore the print impatiently from Cassim's fingers. "You've been wastin' our time, doc. There's nothin' here. Listen, we've done with foolin'——"

"You might take yo' thumb off the bottom there," suggested Cassim. "Kind of missin' things."

He smiled as the men pressed closer. And then his face grew hard and his eyes seemed to blaze with white anger in the strengthened light. "There ain't many men in this camp," he growled, "who'd play double-dirty by shootin' a man in the back and then leavin' another man to hang for it. But there you are—plain! Late afternoon—shadows—long——"

Two shots turned the room into a roaring bedlam—but the sheriff's men were too quick for Dawson.

"You know, Dawson," muttered Cassim, putting a finger to the red snip in his ear, "whatever a good photographer might do to his own brother, he never goes shootin' his own shadow in the back—partic'ly when he's got a wooden left leg to go spoilin' the foreground. Makes a kind of bad picher. . . . Thanks, doc."

COURAGE CAME WITH DAWN

Tested in the flames of this storm-wrecked, midnight drama in a lonely farmhouse, these two people found that fear dies at dawn, if you face it together

BY DELANGE ESSEX

ILLUSTRATED BY KENNETH INNS

BEHIND the little car an elm crashed down, blocking the East Road over the moor from Tonistwey and sparing Stephen Tallas's life by seconds.

Stephen was glad for his life and for the elm. Now there could be no turning back and Tallas knew he had wanted to turn. Desperately. Fear had been with him when he started this journey from London. It was with him now.

His father had implanted the terror in him twenty years ago, when, as a small boy and for some slight, childish fault—more often for no fault at all—Stephen had been ordered into the deep, dark cellar beneath the kitchen at Starcrow Farm.

Only a strain of sadism in his father's grasping, miserly make-up, could have accounted for Mark Tallas's cruelty to his motherless boy. It was deliberate, for it went on down the years, until at eighteen, Stephen, grown enough to resist further bullying, summoned courage to tell his parent he was leaving home to become a singer.

As he drove the car against the thrust of the storm Stephen relived the moments, now seven years old, of his father's fury against him.

"You'll go! But you'll come back one day. And, by God, I'll make you sing a tune then, you wouldn't want the audiences that send you crawling home, to hear!"

Well, he was coming back. But not to crawl.

He was coming to request three hundred pounds of the thousand his mother had left him and which his father's rapacious greed had denied him.

Stephen, of choice, would have forgone the legacy entirely. But the years of struggle in London and upon the Continent, following the greater time of neglect and malnutrition as a child, had led the doctors to warn him of the danger that threatened his future.

As yet it was only a threat. There was a weakness of the throat that could be vanquished if rest and sunshine could be had, for a time.

For seven years Stephen had managed to live and pay his way. But he had no money saved. Three hundred pounds he must have to carry out doctors' orders; since he had no choice he was resolved his father should yield up that much of what was his.

Two years after leaving home he had learned from a chance but trustworthy source that Mark Tallas had married again. Stephen guessed it must be to some woman with money. He could picture his father marrying no other; uncomely and middle-aged, as stung with the money itch as himself.

He bent over the wheel as a vicious gust of wind almost lifted the off-side wheels from the surface of the wretchedly metalled road. The water was coming in all over the roof. It *would* turn out a poisonous night like this for him!

Stephen's lips tightened. It wasn't the storm that was playing on his nerves. It was himself. His father. Starcrow Farm to where he was driving. And that cellar beneath the kitchen.

He was afraid. He always would be afraid. He wished the elm tree hadn't blown across the road. He would have turned back, even now.

Suddenly the inadequate little car lurched forward, sank, then petered out lifelessly and water swirled in above the running board.

With difficulty Stephen thrust open the door and stepped out to find himself waist high in water. Part of the road had collapsed; there was no moving the car and certainly there was no going back the forty miles to Tonistwey. He must go on the few remaining miles to Starcrow on foot.

It was no more than minutes before his clothes hung, sodden, about him. The icy gale had him shivering, for all the effort it took to fight it. At last, came the glow that the poorest light makes, welcomingly, upon a landscape of unrelieved darkness.

For all that, it seemed ages before Stephen staggered across the farm yard. He did not bother to knock. In the howl of the storm he knew no other sound would be heard. Inside the hall he paused to get breath, then felt his way forward with the sureness of familiarity which time never kills. Then he opened a second door leading into the farmhouse parlour.

And stood immovable. Not with fear but with amazement.

The woman had been sewing before the fire on the open hearth. She did not leave her chair; just looked up, her face pale against the dark stuff of her dress.

Her frock, of no modern mode, with its little bodice and full, spreading skirts, made Stephen think of a Victorian fashion. Dark hair, braided tightly about her small head, crowned a lovely face whose youthfulness had provoked his astonishment. And left him with a faint, ill-defined feeling of resentment.

"I—I'm so sorry I barged in on you like this!" he apologised, not easily recovering from surprise. "I'm Stephen—Stephen Tallas. You must—I suppose you are Mrs. Tallas? My stepmother——"

"Oh, indeed, no!" She was upon her feet now, and with denial Stephen saw relief and a little smile of humour come into her face. "I am Anne Gowan. Your father and his wife left here long ago. Let me see—yes, three years it would be. My husband bought Starcrow Farm from Farmer Tallas. He is—away just now."

Stephen felt his resentment fade. The feeling was more lively than his fresh surprise at learning his father was no longer at the farm; that his long and vile journey had been for nothing. He explained he had not heard from his father for years and perhaps she knew where he now lived. He described the final disaster to his car and pointed, ruefully, to the puddle widening on the floor from his dripping clothes.

"It looks as if I'll have to beg your hospitality for the night, Mrs. Gowan," he said. "I'm sure, in the circumstances, you won't mind. Of course, in the morning——"

"Mr. Tallas, I'm sorry," came her hurried, nervous interruption, "but I really can't let you stay here. I—I know it sounds utterly wrong—inexcusable, but would you go away from here, now. I mean—at once, *please*?"

Stephen was certain he had not heard aright. Anne Gowan saw that and repeated the request.

"But you can't be really serious?" came Stephen's doubtful protest. "Why, it's honestly not fit to put a dog out of doors to-night. I've no wish to give you trouble but it happens I'm not in too good fettle just now, Mrs. Gowan, or I'd——"

"It isn't that!" Shame and appeal in her voice made Stephen search her face afresh. "It is—my husband," she faltered. "He is beside himself with jealousy of me."

"Jealousy?" echoed Stephen. The bowed head nodded.

"That is why he—we are on this farm. To keep as far from people—other men. He has no reason——"

"Of course not!" Stephen agreed, hastily. "But your husband, whoever he is, *can't* be jealous of me! The whole notion is too ridiculous for words. Why, until five minutes ago we weren't aware of one another's existence. I—what you suggest isn't reasonable."

"He is not reasonable. Where I am concerned." And her growing distress began to make everything, for Stephen, unreal. "He doesn't care for me to go into Tonistwey alone. And I think he does all the work on the farm himself for fear a farm hand should look at me."

Stephen stared at the slender figure, virginal in its unstudied pose of quiet suffering.

"And yet you married him?" The words slipped out.

"Yes. We were very poor." She broke off, that saving sense of humour compelling a little laugh to her lips. "Oh, I'm not trying to excuse myself. I was very young; Phil seemed so very good and Mother wanted it, too." She paused again with another little gesture. "Why am I telling you all

this? It doesn't excuse my rudeness. And—and I still want you to go."

"You said your husband was out? When will he get back?"

She explained that Phillip Gowan had left for Exeter that afternoon, that ordinarily he was gone two days. But she was sure the storm would have turned him back.

"He'll be here any minute now." She touched Stephen's arm. "I always know when he is coming to the house. You'll laugh at me; call it nerves. Perhaps," she hesitated a moment, "perhaps it is all very foolish of me. But he has threatened, often enough, what he would do if ever he found—anyone with me. No doubt he was just—frightening me. But, please, I would rather you go."

Even through the thickness of the ancient walls of the farmhouse the noise of the storm compelled them to raise their voices.

"Listen," said Stephen, his free hand closing upon hers as it rested on his arm. "I'm not going. I am staying. And much more for your sake than for my own."

Her eyes went wide but Stephen tightened his hold of her hand.

"This jealousy of your husband's, it's an obsession. You weren't waiting for me to come along and tell you that. But it's made *you* afraid. Kept you in a state of dread that before long will become as equally irrational. I know what I'm saying, Mrs. Gowan. Because *I* have always been afraid. But there's no time to talk about that. But I am going to meet your husband. I'll make him realise that you and I never saw each other before to-night. Don't you see? If he can be made to acknowledge that his jealousy is without cause and for no reason, why then his obsession about you and against you will be broken."

But she would not have it. The more he persuaded, the more reasoned his argument, the more pathetic grew her anxiety for him to be gone.

Until Stephen, about to give in, caught the moving arc of bright light on the wall of the indifferently lit room and knew it for the beam of a car's headlamps through a gap in the curtained window.

"It's Phil!" He heard the girl's soft cry. "It's too late now!"

She was so terrified that Stephen could no longer look at her.

"Don't worry," he said, moving past her. "I'll slip out. There's a way through the kitchen."

He was half way across the kitchen before she caught up with him.

"You can't go that way. Our garage is at the back. Phil comes in that way."

Stephen turned about and his eyes were lowered to the floor.

Then Anne heard him say very thoughtfully:

"We never used to have our table over the trap door like you've got it. But I can shift it. Then if I hide in the cellar, I can clear out later. You skip back to the parlour and wipe up that rain water off the floor."

But the girl watched the kitchen door the while he pushed the table forward, knelt down and with unflurried haste pushed back the two stout bolts securing the hinged flap.

Then her warning cry brought him to his feet as the door opened and her husband stood upon the threshold.

For a moment he flung words at both her and Stephen in a way that made useful response impossible. But at last Stephen got in a word.

"Mr. Gowan, I'm Stephen Tallas," he said, deciding that the simple truth of the circumstances that had brought him to his old home must be more convincing than any other story he might think up. But Gowan turned his back on him.

"In the end, I knew you'd trip up!" he spat at his wife. "You've been smart in your goings on, but if I was patient I was certain I'd catch you at it, and now I have——"

"Gowan, shut up!" Stephen all but lost his temper. "You're absolutely barking up the wrong tree. I'm old Farmer Tallas's son. Come home to see the old man. I'd no idea he'd left——"

"Lies!" retorted Gowan, as he followed the girl who was shrinking back into the parlour. "You wouldn't come to Exeter with me to-day, would you? And no wonder. He was to come——"

"Phil, that's all wrong!" answered the girl and Stephen could see how she fought her own terror in order to try and reason with him. "I didn't want to go, dear, because I knew there'd be a storm. Mr. Tallas has only been here——"

"There weren't storms all the other times I've been to Exeter! You stayed home then, didn't you? Because you'd arranged for this fellow——"

Again Gowan broke off and, with the craftiness that is characteristic of unstable minds, twisted about and leapt at Stephen.

Just in time, the latter sidestepped, saw the girl was safe on the far side of the parlour, pressed against the brickwork of the inglenook.

Stephen moved into the room which was much larger than the kitchen and less hampered with furniture.

If he could avoid violence, manœuvre Gowan into pursuing him and so get him out of the house into the farm yard, he could, if absolutely necessary, try to knock him out there.

After that the girl must go to her friends. It was pretty obvious she stood in need of protection.

At first his plan succeeded but when he made for the passage Gowan headed him off. With no other choice Stephen made away at right angles for the kitchen, took a running jump over the table, hand reaching for the door.

Gowan turned too, but from where he was his shortest route avoided the table.

Stephen in the doorway, heard his cry of triumph change into a cry of panic accompanied by the sound of tearing timber.

He turned to see his pursuer, arms upflung, disappearing through the trap, the door of which, with the support of the bolts withdrawn, had collapsed through the inadequate and rotted wooden ledge on which it had rested.

He heard the thud on the stone flags below as his eyes sought the figure of the girl across the space of the two rooms.

Then he moved to the lamp and turned up the wick as Anne came towards him. He was aware of her as he knelt by the square hole in the floor and lowered the lamp into the darkness.

He knew what he would see. Phillip Gowan was lying inert, his head doubled against his chest. He was quite dead.

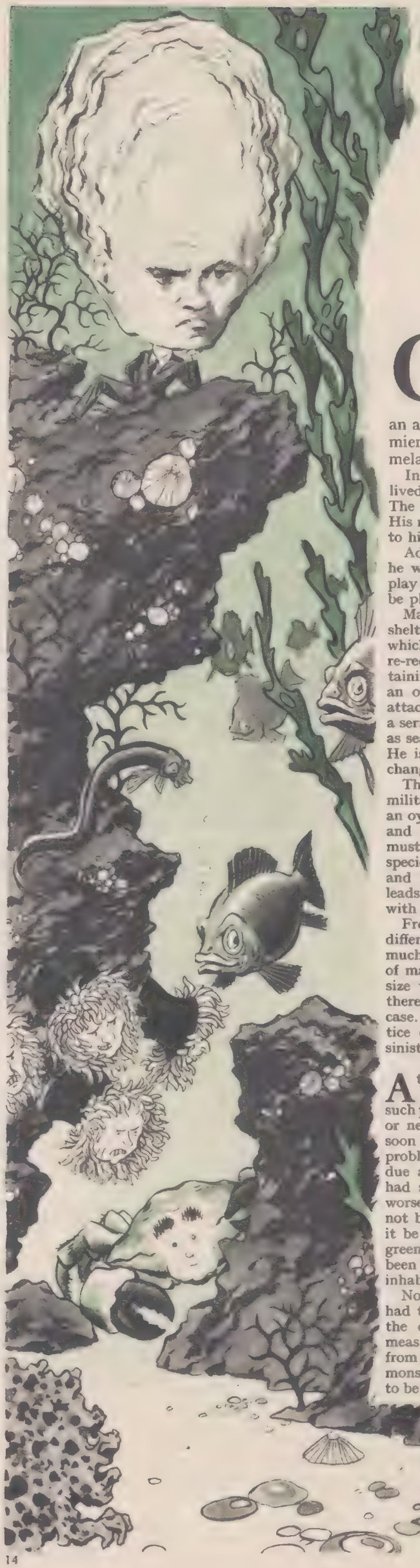
For all that, Stephen lowered himself slowly down the old, perpendicular ladder at the side of the trap and, bending over, made certain he was not mistaken. Then Anne saw him come out of the cellar.

She went to him, a moan escaping her as she collapsed against him.

Carefully Stephen set the lamp upon the table and gently he put his hand upon her dark head.

"It's all right!" he said, looking through the open doorway where the faintest streak of grey was discernible now in the stormswept sky. "Neither you, nor I, are ever going to be afraid again."

Her warning cry brought him to his feet as the door opened and her husband stood upon the threshold. For a moment he flung words at both her and Stephen in a way that made useful response impossible. But at last Stephen got a word in



The Ugly Mollusc

A fairy story of love and virtue triumphant on an oyster bed that is full of wit and deep understanding of the little people who fear the "R" in the month

BY FRANK SULLIVAN

ILLUSTRATED BY RONALD LAMPITT

ONE quiet, summer afternoon, a large oyster sat on a rock, in an estuary off Cape Cod, thoughtfully surveying the world about him. He was not exactly a handsome oyster, yet he had an air of distinction. There was a gravity in his mien, a kind of dignity amounting almost to melancholy, that set him apart.

Indeed, he was apart. The rest of the oysters lived in the oyster bed, down the estuary a bit. The big oyster lived, a solitary exile, on the rock. His name was Adrian, but the other oysters referred to him, sneeringly, as the Ugly Mollusc.

Adrian was not like other oysters and, because he was not like other oysters, because he did not play the game as his fellow oysters thought it should be played, he was paying the price.

Many people seem to feel that an oyster leads a sheltered life. Far from it. Aside from the raids which decimate and redecimate and sometimes re-redecimate an oyster colony during months containing an *R*, there are other dangers with which an oyster must cope. He is subject to constant attack from his natural enemy, the sponge, and from a series of other ferocious creatures with such names as sea anemone, whelk, whelk tingle and sea squirt. He is also subject to periodical and unpredictable changes in sex.

This is the factor which, more than any other, militates against dullness and precludes boredom in an oyster's life. He never knows, from day to day, and this gives a fillip to oyster courtships which must make even such classic romances, in our species, as that of Romeo and Juliet, or Abèlard and Hèloïse, seem rather routine. If an oyster leads a dull life, then so does a parachute jumper with a hole in his parchute.

From the beginning, Adrian had been—well, different. As a very young oyster, he had been so much larger than the others that he was the object of many gibes directed at his ungainliness, but his size would not have been a major disability had there been nothing else wrong. Such was not the case. Shortly after Adrian, with the other apprentice oysters, had started work on his first pearl, sinister rumours began to circulate.

At first the older oysters paid no heed. A young oyster's first pearl is a big event in his life and such pearls often go wrong because of over-enthusiasm or nervousness on the part of the novice. But it soon became apparent that Adrian presented a problem which could no longer be ignored. After due allowance for false starts, every other novice had some kind of pearl started, for better or for worse. Adrian also had got something started, but not by the widest stretch of the imagination could it be called a pearl. It was an ugly, nondescript, greenish-black atrocity. Nothing like it had ever been seen in the oyster colony, not by the oldest inhabitant.

Nobody was more bewildered by the turn events had taken than poor Adrian. He had followed all the directions and had taken exactly the same measures as his fellow apprentices. It was farthest from his thoughts to turn out a greenish-black monstrosity instead of a pearl. He did not want to be different. More than anything else, he wanted to be like other oysters—like Sheldon, for instance.

Sheldon, an oyster somewhat older than Adrian, had only recently graduated from the novice class, yet he had already turned out several pearls of a fineness that had won the acclaim of veteran oysters. A brilliant future was predicted for him. He was clever, ambitious, resourceful and industrious almost to the point of stuffiness. His every waking thought was devoted to planning schemes whereby he could produce a larger quantity of pearls without impairing the quality. And he was formally betrothed to Flora, the fairest of the twenty-two hundred living daughters of old Dean Cotuit, the head oyster of the bed. No doubt of it, Sheldon was going places.

Naturally, a successful oyster like Sheldon could have little but contempt for a blunderer like Adrian. This contempt he made no effort to conceal. Often he would twit Adrian, saying, "Well, how is your so-called pearl getting on?" for he had a sharp wit.

Public opinion in the bed was dead against Adrian. The general feeling was that there was no excuse for him. If an oyster wanted to turn out a pearl, he could do so, if he had a mind to. It always had been done. All felt that Adrian was a disgrace to the community and that sympathy for him was wasted.

Every morning Adrian awoke, hoping against hope that the situation might have remedied itself overnight. It never did. The "pearl" grew odder and more misshapen, until it reached the proportions of a public scandal. Between the jeers of the young oysters, for youth can be cruel to youth, and the cold disapproval of the elders, his lot grew steadily more unhappy. More than once he thought of ending it all.

Matters came to a head quite unexpectedly one day. It was during the inspection of pearls. Dean Cotuit arrived at Adrian's place in the ranks and, nerving himself to the ordeal with a visible effort, took a peek inside Adrian's shell. The dean drew back with a shudder.

"Ugh!" he said. "Worse than ever."

"If that's a pearl," young Sheldon observed, "I'm your grandmother."

This sally drew a laugh from the coterie of sycophants which surrounded him.

"This can't go on any longer," said the dean, with decision.

"If you'd give me just a little more time," Adrian ventured.

"Time? You've had all the time in the world. We can't afford to have a situation like this continue. If this thing got noised abroad, we'd be the laughing-stock of every oyster bed along the Atlantic coast."

"If you'll only be patient," Adrian pleaded, "I'm sure I can make good."

"A likely story," sneered Sheldon.

"He ought to be thrown out of the oyster bed," said a second oyster, indignantly.

Others contributed similar comments.

"This colony certainly ought to be proud of you—I don't think," Sheldon hurled at Adrian.

For some time past, into Adrian's admiration for Sheldon there had been creeping, insidiously but surely, another emotion, of which, due to the disturbed state of his affairs, he had not been quite conscious. Now it suddenly jelled.

"You keep out of this," he heard himself hissing at Sheldon.

The oysters were petrified. This was the first sign of anything like defiance that had come from Adrian. Cotuit was the first to recover from the general astonishment.

"It ill behoves you, sir," he told Adrian, sharply, "to take a tone like that to a member of this bed of Sheldon's standing. You ought to thank your lucky stars that you are tolerated here, without vilifying your betters."

"Oh, pay no attention to him," said Sheldon. "I consider the source."

"Apologise to Sheldon," the dean commanded.

Something snapped inside Adrian. "I'll be damned if I will," he barked.

The oysters reeled under the impact of this defiance. A strange intoxication seized Adrian now and he plunged on recklessly.

"Apologise to that prig!" he shouted. "Ha! I should say not!"

Then he had a sudden impulse. Crazed by success, he obeyed it. He tripped Sheldon and sent him sprawling.

"There," he said, with a mocking laugh. "There's your apology."

Again the dean was first to find his voice. "I think," he said, with forced calm, "you had better go."

"You bet I'm going," said Adrian, "but before I go, I have something to say to you. I don't know why I haven't said it before. I don't know why I've taken any nonsense from the likes of you. But something snappped in me just now and I see you all in your true colours. I see you for what you are—a pack of mean, smug, insufferable, self-seeking, pearl-worshipping, mean——"

"Oh, come now, you said 'mean' before. Fair play, you know," protested one aggrieved oyster.

"Mean," repeated Adrian, glaring at him, "low-down, grubby little stuffed shirts."

The oysters winced. They had never before been called all those names at once.

"You had better go now," the dean said, "before you say something you'll be sorry for."

"That—for you!" Adrian snapped.

Feeling better than he had in months, he turned and stalked down the estuary, looked about him for a likely Elba and finally chose the rock.

"Look where the sap anchored," Sheldon said to Dean Cotuit. "A bunch of the toughest anemones along the Atlantic coast hang out around that rock. He won't last a week."

That was what Sheldon thought. It was what the tough anemones thought, too. All were disillusioned. The first anemone that attacked Adrian, with a view to making a meal of him, barely escaped with its life. The second didn't. The third, and successive anemones, stayed away. Adrian became known up and down the estuary as one oyster who would brook no nonsense from any anemone. Sponges, whelks, tingles, starfish and sea squirts also learned to give him a wide berth.

Somehow, from the crucible of sorrow, Adrian emerged a better, a finer oyster. Suffering ennobled him and adversity stamped him with a certain tragic glamour. His exile had its compensations. At least he no longer had to worry about the "pearl." This was just as well, for it did not grow any better—just kept getting larger and more queer looking and less like a pearl all the time. Adrian seldom bothered to look at it. On the whole, he was not unhappy in his exile, and the days slipped by until the afternoon arrived on which we found him sitting pensively on the rock. He was thinking of the turbulent life that had been his and reflecting that, if he had not achieved happiness, he had at least won a measure of serenity.

Suddenly he was aroused by a cry. He looked. There, some distance from the rock, was a beautiful young oyster in the grip of a burly sponge.

Flora Cotuit, lovely daughter of the dean, and betrothed of Sheldon, had felt that afternoon that she would scream if she did not get away from her twenty-one hundred and ninety-nine sisters with their silly chatter, and her eligible, but sometimes wearisome fiancé with his eternal shop talk about pearls. She had slipped out of the oyster bed and down the estuary to get a little peace and quiet. Suddenly the sponge had confronted her, leering, menacing and ravenous.

(*please turn to page* 17)

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MADE BY DRAYTON MILLS

Adrian took in the situation at a glance. There was not a moment to lose. In a week at the outside, Flora Cotuit would have met a slow death by absorption. He unhitched himself from his moorings and, by bending every effort, reached her side late in the afternoon of the same day.

The sponge, absorbed in his preparations for the kill, did not notice Adrian's approach until the latter squeezed him. Accustomed to dealing with oysters who rarely put up a fight, the sponge was taken off guard. Before he had time to collect his wits, Adrian nipped him again, nipped off a segment fully large enough to make one of those little sponges used for cleaning white shoes. It floated off. The sponge looked after it in astonishment. While he was looking, Adrian pinched off another hunk. It floated off. Adrian nipped another. And another. Pieces of sponge were floating down the current like toy balloons escaped from tots at a county fair. It demoralised the sponge. Like all bullies, he was a coward at heart. Releasing Flora from his grip, he beat an ignominious retreat, frantically gathering up as many portions of his anatomy as he could, with a view to reassembling himself when he had reached a place of safety.

"How can I ever thank you?" said Flora.

"It was nothing," said Adrian.

"Nothing? You call saving a life nothing?"

"Life," echoed Adrian, cynically.

"You are—bitter."

"You know that I am the Ugly Mollusc, eh?" Adrian laughed and there was something in his laugh that was not pleasant to hear.

"How they must have hurt you to make you laugh like that," said Flora, gently.

Kind words from an oyster were something Adrian was not prepared to cope with. In self-defence, he resorted to gruffiness:

"You had a close call. You have no business down here. This neighbourhood is filled with unscrupulous sponges who would stop at nothing."

"I had to get away from it all—up there," sighed Flora. "Well——"

She turned to go. Then she paused and turned.

"I do not think that you are—ugly," she said.

Then she turned and went. As she went she upset Adrian's life.

Next afternoon, Adrian sat on his rock, his life upset, thinking of Flora. Suddenly a cry! Her voice!

This time it was not a sponge that had her in its fell clutch, but a particularly ferocious sea squirt. It took some time to rescue her.

"You," said Adrian, facing her after the rescue. "You—here?"

"I had to come," said Flora, simply.

After that she came every day. Each afternoon at the same time, Adrian would hear the same cry for help, and there would be Flora, in the clutch of some new enemy. The rescues grew to be fun. They both looked forward to them.

Love is a peculiar emotion and it has peculiar effects. It makes some creatures want to go out and knock down fellow creatures and trample on them. It makes others dye their hair, or commence to wear fancy neckties. Others write sonnets. Love affected Flora's pearl.

She had never been much of a hand at pearls. Her attempts were the despair of her father, the cause of much hilarity among her sisters and a source of grave concern to her ambitious fiancé. The one she had been working on at the time of her first meeting with Adrian had been a dull, lustreless pellicle.

Now, under the impact of love, it bloomed. Almost overnight and with scarcely any attention from Flora, it became a lovely, shimmering globule, with overtones of pink suggestive of rosy-fingered dawn in one of her less flamboyant moods.

Adrian became a new oyster. Hitherto careless of his personal appearance, he now spent half the morning scraping himself against the rock, so that by the time Flora appeared on the scene for her daily rescue, all the tiny barnacles which attach themselves to an oyster and make it so difficult for him to keep himself neat and clean had been scrubbed off, leaving Adrian quite the Beau Brummel.

They were very happy in their new-found love, but it could not last. The course of true love never does run smooth. If it did, the movie theatres would be empty. It was not long until news of the liaison reached the oyster bed.

One day Sheldon went to old Cotuit in a state of great agitation.

"Mr. Cotuit," he said, "Flora has been seeing that cad."

"Which cad?"

"The Ugly Mollusc."

Sheldon told the dean the story. Flora was sent for. She admitted everything readily.

"I cannot understand you, Flora," Sheldon complained. "Here you are, the affianced bride of the most brilliant pearl producer in the estuary——"

Flora turned on him.

"Pearls!" she cried. "That's all you think of—pearls. Doesn't it ever occur to you that there is something more to life than pearls? Don't you ever think of romance, beauty, love?"

"Silence!" thundered her father. "I have heard enough. You marry Sheldon immediately."

"Never," said Flora.

"I am not here to argue," Cotuit said. "You marry Sheldon or you leave this oyster bed, never to return. You have until to-morrow to decide."

That night Flora slipped out, made her way to the rock and told Adrian what had happened. He heard her in silence. He seemed troubled. When Flora finished, he was lost in thought for some time.

"No," he said, finally. "There is no other way out."

Somehow, Flora did not like his tone. "Adrian, what is it?"

"Flora, you must go with Sheldon," said Adrian.

"Are you mad, Adrian?"

"Please try to understand."

"Don't ask me to understand. When a girl is in love, she never understands. I love you, Adrian."

"I have thought it all out. It—it cannot be."

"Cannot be?"

"Cannot be. What have I to offer you? Hardship, penury, exile, social ostracism. He offers you security, wealth, social position."

LITTLE SCHOLAR

Little Scholar . . . loose among the Redskin hordes. A lovely face that haunted his wilderness . . . and a red-haired scalp that rattled like an empty snakeskin. Listen to the thrilling story

"NOT A FIGHTING MAN"

NEXT WEEK

"Do you think I care for those baubles?"

"You don't now. Later you would miss them. You would hate me."

"Adrian, you are cruel."

"I am cruel only in order to be kind. I cannot let you sacrifice yourself for me."

"Why not?"

"Because I love you too much."

"This is your final decision?"

"It is better so, Flora."

"Then it is good-bye."

"I shall always think of you, Flora."

"With what?" said Flora, in a sudden burst of hurt pride and baffled love, and with that she swept out. The next morning, she told her father she was ready to marry Sheldon.

"Good for you, Flora," said Cotuit. "I knew you would see things in the right light."

They sought Sheldon to tell him and found him sitting pensively on an abandoned chambered-nautilis shell.

"Sheldon, great news!" said Cotuit. "Flora has changed her mind."

Sheldon sat silent, looking rather embarrassed.

"Well, aren't you tickled?"

"The truth is, sir, a rather awkward situation has developed."

Cotuit paled. Flora looked sharply at Sheldon.

"You mean?" asked Cotuit.

"Yes," said Sheldon, demurely.

Cotuit took no pains to conceal his irritation.

"I must say you picked a fine time to change you sex," he barked.

"I had nothing to do with it," Sheldon returned, with spirit. "You know that as well as I do. It could happen to any oyster. It could happen to Flora."

There was a thought. The dean eyed Flora.

"Flora," he began, ingratiatingly.

"No, thanks, father," said Flora, hastily but decisively.

"But, Flora, it would solve everything."

"Not for me. I'm quite comfortable as I am."

"That's right. Be stubborn. Well, we might postpone the wedding." The dean was in no mood for not grasping at straws. "If Sheldon can give us any idea when he'll be—uh—back——"

"Haven't the faintest idea; sorry," said Sheldon. "You know how these things are with us oysters."

"This is a fine mess," stormed old Cotuit. "We oysters boast that we have the ideal solution of the sex problem. Sometimes I wonder."

Quite a crowd had collected by this time and suddenly, on its outskirts, there was a commotion. In another moment, a form had elbowed its way through the crowd.

"Adrian!" cried Flora. "You—here?"

"Flora! What a fool I was to think I could give you up. Can you ever forgive me for being so noble?"

"I knew that you would come," she said simply.

"Flora," cried Adrian in a glad, ringing voice, "you and I against the world. Who dares say us nay?"

He glanced about belligerently in search of possible nay sayers. He caught sight of Sheldon. He paled.

"Flora," he cried, "don't—is it—am I—too late?"

Sheldon answered. "Adrian," he said, "I will be brief and to the point. No."

Adrian took in the situation at a glance. It would scarcely have been cricket to crow over a defeated rival. He started to offer Sheldon his sympathy, but Sheldon would have none of it.

"Quite all right," said Sheldon. "'What can't be cured must be endured,' you know. Matter of fact, I'm beginning to be reconciled. It's not such a bad system. You get every point of view."

Something strange was happening. The crowd, to an oyster, was staring at Adrian.

Around him there hung a curious aura of shimmering green light. The oysters had never seen anything like it. They murmured, wondering.

Then Adrian opened his shell. As he did so, the light became a blaze as a green radiance poured out and was caught by a thousand sunbeams flickering down through the water. Cotuit, blinded by the radiance, fell back. Adrian blinked a little himself.

There in place of the ugly, greenish-black mass that had brought contumely, scorn and exile on Adrian, was—a Gem of Purest Ray Serene!

"A square-cut emerald!" cried Cotuit, in a voice hoarse with awe.

A square-cut emerald. The dream and ambition of every oyster in the world.

Any oyster can whip up a pearl, but from time immemorial every oyster with a spark of ambition had cherished the secret hope that he might be the genius who would pass on to greater triumphs and give to oysterdom its first emerald. Now the dream had been achieved—by an oyster whom his fellow oysters had scorned; whom they had considered unworthy the very name of oyster.

"Adrian," Flora reproached, "you never told me."

"I didn't know about it," Adrian whispered, for he also was momentarily nonplussed. "Hadn't looked at it in months."

"To think," said Cotuit, "that we had in our midst the greatest oyster of his time, and we failed to recognise him."

The oysters were crowding around Adrian to view the wonder. Exclamations of awe and admiration were heard on all sides.

"One matter I'd like to settle immediately," said Adrian. "May I have the honour of your daughter's hand in marriage, Dean Cotuit?"

"Pardon me," said Cotuit. "I am not Dean Cotuit."

Flora started. She looked uneasily at her father. So many odd things had been happening.

"Do you think," Cotuit continued, "that I would presume to continue in that office when this colony is honoured by having in its midst the greatest oyster in the world to-day?"

Adrian looked behind him, modestly pretending he thought the dean meant someone else.

"Ah, I mean you, Adrian," smiled Cotuit. "You are the head man here, from now on."

"But really——" Adrian felt he ought to protest a little for the sake of appearances.

"Nonsense," said Cotuit. "After you, if you please."

A cheer went up from the oysters.

Adrian made a short speech in which he thanked the dean and promising the oysters that he would endeavour, to the best of his ability, to fulfil the sacred trust that they had reposed in him and declaring that he owed everything to Flora.

Flora looked happily at Adrian.

"My—Ugly Mollusc," she murmured, tenderly.

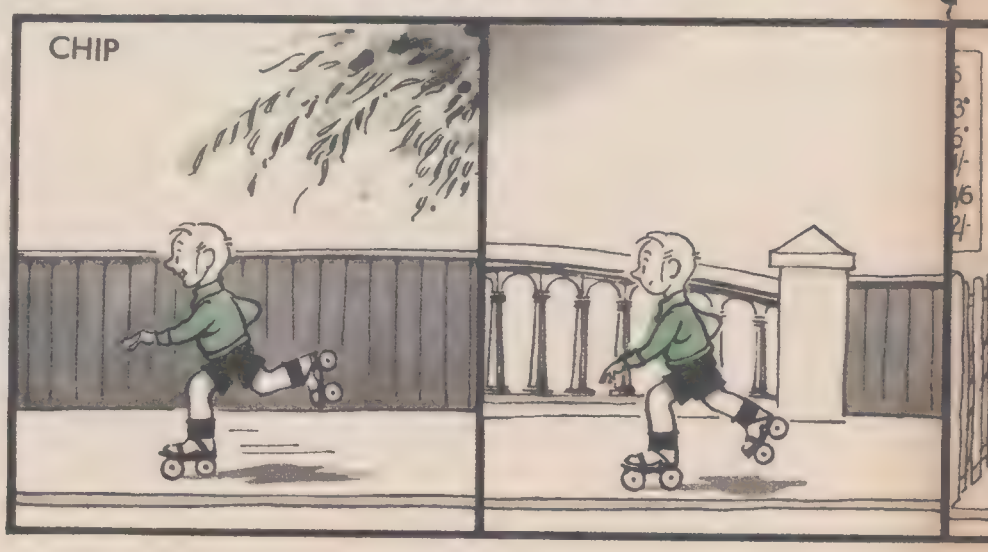
Laugh

The "PASSING SHOW

"Hawkins, cut me two hearts in this tree, pierced with an arrow!"

"Would you mind telling me again where you made that secret pocket, I can't find my wallet?"

The scenic artist plays darts at home.



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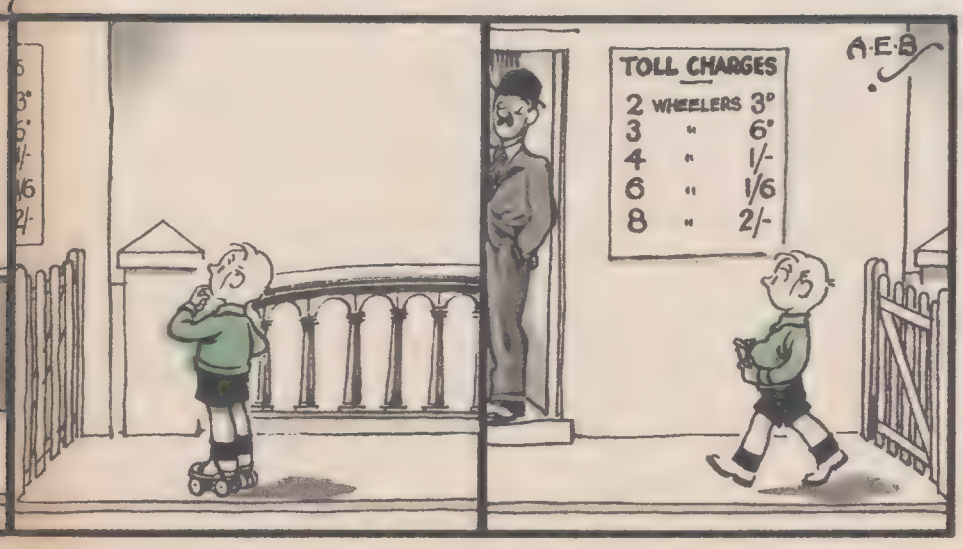
"Goodness knows what the guv'nor will say!"

"My husband made it—he loves animals!"



"It's been aged in our own wine-cellar, sir, you can tell by the cobwebs on the bottle."

"It's my daughter, people will have music with their meals, nowadays."

A MAN AND A MARROW

By A. C. BARRETT

LAUGH WITH THE WORLD

"He wants to know if we can give him new wireless valves for his old ones—glass beads are of no use."

—Das Illustrierte Blatt, Frankfurt.

"Your hoarseness seems to have got worse."

"Yes, I have had to tell so many people how it was going on."

Das Illustrierte Blatt, Frankfurt.—

CAMPING—OUT!

BY SHOWELL STYLES

"The stoves that loose one sheet of searing flame upon the air to singe the patient camper's hair."

The object of this little work is to dispel such mist or murk as lingers in the mind about the choice delights of camping out. Of recent years this healthy sport has fascinated every sort of lusty Briton, whether bred in Baker Street or Birkenhead. Since Lady Exe and Colonel Wye lugged trailer-caravans to Rye, it seems that camping is to be the sport of aristocracy as well as of those lesser men who live by plying pick or pen.

I had a friend who never went on holiday without his tent. He stayed at hotels by the shore and pitched it on the bedroom floor. He died of wander-thirst at last—he was a true enthusiast.

But let the novice not despair, for camping in the open air, if one is fairly fit and able, is hardly less uncomfortable. The tent should be extremely small to give you any fun at all; if there is room to swing a mouse, you might as well be in a house. But in the vital interest of public morals, it is best when choosing one to make quite certain there's room enough to change a shirt in.

The roof should not be watertight, but let the rain in overnight; no camper could enjoy a camp unless he got extremely damp.

Remember that all moths and flies are fond of taking exercise by sliding down inside the tent upon the prostrate resident. A so-called "fly-sheet" will provide these pests with healthy sport outside, but this is not considered cricket; true campers do without and stick it, anointing the resultant bites with medicinal composites.

These are permitted by the rules, though certain rather spartan schools of campers swear both by and at the army blanket, rug, or mat. The sleeping bag is much less crude and though the feet do not protrude, the bag makes up in sweltering heat for any lack of frozen feet. And certain kinds leak bits of fluff at every seam. The wretched stuff finds haven in the butter-dish as awkwardly as one could wish.

No tent would be complete without a ground sheet lying round about. In this the numerous ear-wigs dwell, of which all hardy campers tell; and mugs of tea, if overset, will stay in gleaming pools of wet until the thrifty owners drain them back into their place again.

A loaf of bread, a jug of wine —so Persian hikers might define the culinary side of camp. All Britons, save the feckless tramp, will scorn this carefree definition as savouring of malnutrition.

Cooking in camp must always be a very present mystery. No greater joy hath any man than breaking eggs into a pan or stirring soup with bits of stick (the bark will help to make it thick.) There are enthusiasts among us who live on various sorts of fungus, spicing the dish with muttered spells and feigning not to notice smells. One should avoid these glad ascetics unless provided with emetics, and stick to safer cooking feats with tins of beans and potted meats.

It is not generally known that peanuts, pounded with a stone and mixed with rosemary and rue, will make an admirable glue.

Stoves may be classified as: (*a*) the kind that burn the livelong day without producing any heat; (*b*) the sort that loose one sheet of searing flame upon the air to singe the patient camper's hair; and, lastly (*c*), the kind you pump while poising for the backward jump, which long experience forebodes as needful when the thing explodes.

Fires, on the other hand, are good if made with subtly chosen wood, bone-dry, and built in wigwam style with an infinity of guile. Given a warm and sunny day, a breeze that blows the helpful way, and firelighters of proven worth, one match may bring a fire to birth.

The novice often hesitates when faced with dirty cups and plates, and even married men confess a loathing of the business. But experts fear it not at all, for since the rain is sure to fall, they never miss the simple rite of placing things outside at night.

And as for casual bacon-fat, the farmer's dogs will see to that.

The critics of this humble tract, men destitute of truth or tact, have sneered, with one malign consent, "We don't believe he's *got* a tent!" I have a tent, my friends, the best that ever camper-out possessed. It lives upon the store-room shelf. I've never used the thing, myself.

To end, if this brief survey wins one convert to our English inns, where—if the coffee *is* a curse, the meals a mockery, or worse, the beds a fakir's dream of hell in bedrooms furnished like a cell—at least there's shelter from the rain, the authors' toil is not in vain.

Concluding

3 BAD MEN

with the story of John Sutter, who owned the state of California and in whose death there was the greatest irony

BY
GEORGE EDINGER

ILLUSTRATED BY EDWARD OSMOND

MAN WHO OWNED CALIFORNIA

WHEN they picked John Sutter up in a frayed overcoat, very thin and white, on July 17, 1880, on the steps of the House of Representatives at Washington, after he had collapsed from heart failure, he had in his pocket a judgment from the district court of San Francisco that made him the richest man in the world.

It was 46 years since he had come to America from his native Switzerland. He had also come from a wife and three children, a host of creditors, baulked by his bankruptcy and the police of two countries, who were pursuing him on charges of theft and forgery, respectively, both of them extremely well substantiated.

And after a long and wearisome journey over the continent, he came, at last, to Vancouver.

. Sutter went from Vancouver in a small sailing vessel that carried him by way of the Sandwich Isles to a Californian fishing-village which took from a neighbouring monastery its name of San Francisco.

At last he had found his journey's end. On this rich soil, under this warm sun, in this superb climate beyond the reach of judges and gendarmes, he planned to begin his life again.

An interview with General Alverado, who governed these parts for the Mexican Republic from the capital and market town of Monterey, confirmed his hopes. In return for his promise to plant and to colonise, the General gave him as much land as a galloping mustang could encircle between sunrise and sundown.

The grant accorded, John Sutter set to work to carry out his part of the bargain. He staked out his colony at New Helvetia. Three Europeans, 150 Kanakas, 30 buffaloes, 50 horses, the cows and sheep with which he stocked it increased and multiplied apace and New Helvetia waxed and prospered.

Vines were planted, the first in California, with roots from Burgundy and from the Rhine. Peach trees and orange trees were planted, the ancestors of Californian orange groves without number. A Pleyel piano came precariously from Paris on a schooner round Cape Horn and 60 buffaloes dragged him a steam engine across the whole of the United States.

John Sutter, three years younger than the century was California's leading citizen in 1848. The old Mexican province had become United States territory and Sutter, looking ahead with all confidence, remembered he had a wife and three children. So he wrote for them to join him.

But before they came, momentous things happened in California. John Marshall, his overseer, called one evening with some grains of gold wrapped in a napkin. As Sutter handled them under the lamp, the overseer, wildly excited, burst out with his story. Mrs. Marshall had been washing clothes in the mill race. As the water ran off, it left these in the sediment behind.

And Sutter stood by hardly hearing, gaping at the little yellow grains that would make a very rich man the richest man the world had seen. It was the first gold found in California.

Sutter told Marshall to keep the find a secret. He told him three times, but Mrs. Marshall had already betrayed the secret and next morning all New Helvetia knew it. They knew it and there was no holding them.

The smiths deserted their forges, the shepherds left their flocks and the labourers ran out of the vineyard. Everybody was at the millstream panning for gold. The cows, with bursting udders, lowed pitifully over the pastures, the buffaloes had broken loose and the fences were broken down.

The gold rush had begun !

And as all this crazy, greedy world rushed west, one man, broken, wan, despairing, set his lonely course back again to the east. John Sutter had lost everything. The gold miners and the squatters had swallowed New Helvetia. The colony was a maze of shacks and tents, a tangle of disputed claims. Not a fruit tree stood, scarce an acre of pasture was left green. But one thing kept John Sutter alive. Justice.

He would have justice. That he was a fugitive from the justice he sought, that he had used the rights of others more barbarously than any miner had used his properties in New Helvetia, never once entered his head.

He was a bitterly wronged man and if there were a breath of honour and fair dealing in the Union, he would get his rights.

Slowly, painfully, with his family about him, he built up out of the wreck. From the fruits of his little Kansas farm, he brought the eldest of his three children up to study the law. He questioned him about those rights of his out in the Golden West and when the boy answered his questions, John Sutter smiled, then he acted.

From the State of California, for damage to his property at New Helvetia, John Sutter claimed twenty-five million dollars.

From the Municipality of San Francisco, for arrears of rent due and accruing from January, 1848 till March, 1855, John Sutter claimed twenty-five million dollars.

John Sutter served notice to quit on 17,221 farmers and smallholders, reserving always the right to claim damages as and when he should see fit to do so.

It was John Sutter, junior, who took the case for his father and when District Judge Williams sat to hear it, the courthouse was guarded by two hundred deputy marshals with loaded guns.

Beyond them, the San Francisco mob howled its wrath and roared its threats of vengeance on John Sutter. Williams was one of those lawyers who somehow always seem to be on the bench at a crisis.

With a mob yelling for his blood, with proffered bribes running into millions if he should rule against the plaintiff, with a great human tragedy staring him in the face, he gave his mind to clauses, interpretations and precedents with as much academic concentration as if he had been sitting in the Harvard Law School.

On the third day, he read his judgment in a dry, dreary voice, finding for John Sutter to the full amount claimed. And the Sheriff's marshals cocked their guns.

That night, hell broke loose in San Francisco. The courthouse was burned to the ground. Judge Williams had to run for his life. John Sutter, junior, was lynched by the San Francisco mob. And the old man, dazed, not understanding, shattered by his misfortune as though it were an apoplexy, had to be dragged out of the danger by his friends.

It might have been better had he stayed, to let the rabble lynch him, along with that lawyer son, of whom he had grown so proud.

For they were grim and ghastly years that lay ahead, when he dragged himself from office to office, from senator to senator, from one lawyer to the other, till they had wheedled the last of his pension out of him and death was too long coming.

MUCH FINE GOLD

BY MICHAEL KENT

ILLUSTRATED BY ILLINGWORTH

GREAT uncle Samuel was a brisk little man, jerky in speech and movement, lean and very dapper in his grey bowler, shiny, brown leggings, white stock tie pinned with a diamond horseshoe, full skirted coat with poacher's pockets and a generous taste in waistcoats. He had ever an eye for a slim ankle, a likely horse and the more rollicking arts of roguery.

I remember him well when he was in the later 'seventies and myself but rising eight, about the time of Queen Victoria's Jubilee. The family regarded him askance for the careless prodigality of his acquaintance, poachers, gipsies and all sorts of scamps; but my father, in his staid business of the law, at times found the old man's natural gifts of more effect than his own *caveats*.

That fact brought him to dine one evening when my mother kept her room with a migraine.

Across the gap of fifty years, I can recall the room, candle lit and shadowy, a portrait of my great grandfather in frilled shirt front over the mantelpiece, and the table's glitter of silver and glass, gold pointed in the candlelight.

I sat, feet dangling, between my father, bland, brown whiskered, bowling his finished periods down the table to my great uncle, thin, saturnine, inscrutable.

"I suppose, uncle," said my father, "you have no desire to invest in a mortgage of indubitable security?"

"Can't say I have, nephew, can't say I have," he returned.

"Mrs. Bigglestone has called in her advances on the Wych Tannery property," said my father. "A readjustment which entails certain. . . ."

"Has she, egad?" interrupted my uncle and cracked a walnut.

They regarded each other significantly across the white damask.

"The lady is interested in building development in Cheshire and Lancashire, I understand," said my father, evenly.

My great uncle laughed like a horse neighing. I knew that laugh. It meant that he was angry.

"A pretty pickle," he said. "A pretty pickle you have here, nephew!"

My father shrugged his shoulders and spread his hands.

"I have been asked to take instructions," he said, "and further enjoined not to proffer advice." He paused a moment and added casually, "I believe she has a visitor."

"You're right, Robert. She has." My great uncle, crinkling thin fingers and quivering his shaggy brows over the peeling of his walnut, looked somehow like an ogre. "Willoughby Wentworth. Friend to half Debrett, I'm told. Picked him up at Kingsgate when she was staying there, a fortnight ago."

"You have made his acquaintance?" asked my father, hopefully.

"Oh, no!" returned the old man and looked up, grinning, "Would you like me to?"

My father did not answer the question.

"Carry the port to your uncle, Mick," he said, "and be careful not to shake it. The point is, uncle, that I looked after poor Bigglestone's affairs as long as he lived. I feel a moral obligation to see that his widow does not do anything foolish. It is difficult, very difficult. A woman of forty, still attractive, well provided for, headstrong."

"Tell her to keep the money where it's safe," advised my uncle.

"I did," my father told him, holding up his wineglass and looking through the port to the light. "I was reminded that a provincial lawyer has naturally less opportunity for forming a judgment on financial matters, than a gentleman with influential friends in the city and the peerage."

"She said that, did she, egad?" said my uncle. "Got you on the raw. I'm not surprised. Beggar on horseback, eh?"

"She also warned me that she might not always be the widow of a successful Italian warehouseman."

"If the woman's a fool," said my uncle, "you can't help it."

My father rose from his place and took his stand on the hearth rug, leaning back against the mantelshelf.

"I had a great respect for poor Bigglestone," he said, "A most worthy citizen, an honest grocer. If the matter only affected his relict I should not feel so much responsibility, but there are the three girls. The eldest is but fifteen. It is terrible to think that their mother's folly may involve them in ruin."

"Very noble," said my uncle. "Very right and proper, Robert."

He sat there grinning at his glass as if the situation amused him.

"The point at issue is, is this fellow sound, or an adventurer," demanded my father. "If the latter truly describes him, how can I convince her?"

My uncle turned to me.

"I thought we'd find reason for the milk in the coconut before we went much farther, Bup," said he, with a wink. "Your father can't get on without us!"

At that moment, Emily knocked at the door and carried me off to bed.

My great uncle often walked in the Dungeon Gardens, a place of pleasant greens and lime tree avenues within the old ramparts. He took me the next morning to the top of the mount; a grassy sugar loaf topped by an obelisk to which zig-zag paths gave access. From a sunny niche at the summit the old man aimed his meditations at me, while I listened with awe and understood but little.

He lit a long, thin cigar, black as a yew twig.

"Now, in judging a nag, Bup," he said, "what do you look for?"

He constantly used the term "Bup" to me, but whether as a term of address or a means of emphasis I was never certain.

"His head, his hocks, his withers and his teeth, you'll say, Bup," he went on. "Right, Bup, right. But you can't judge cigars by the picture on the box. The nag seems likely. Paces please you, but how do you know he's game?"

"I 'spect you'd know, uncle," I said, "and I bet you've got something up your sleeve now."

"Maybe I have," he said and winked solemnly at me. "Maybe I have and we'll go down to 'The Fleece' to see."

He took me in to the saloon bar. In those days governments were not so pernickety about children being on licensed premises.

Even the womenfolk joined in. A slim and fair-haired girl, with her skirts most indecorously caught in the crook of her elbow, showed a surprising turn of speed

The place was empty, but we had not been there long before a tall man entered and, slapping a coin down on the hatch which served as a bar, said, "Scotch and soda, m'dear."

He wore a grey top hat on the side of his curly, black hair, his eyes were big and bold, his moustache finely pointed. He wore a black frock coat and sponge bag trousers.

"Scotch," said Miss Bowditch, at the hatch, "and soda and your change, sir."

"Charmer," said the gentleman, "don't desert me."

But Miss Bowditch, a lady of strict principles, left him to his thoughts and refreshment.

From our window-seat across the room, my uncle watched him covertly.

"Bup," he said to me, in a whisper, "if the gentleman's glass got knocked over accidentally, I shouldn't be surprised if the fairies were about later in the day."

I understood that cryptic reference. My great uncle had a wonderful gift for snatching coins from the empty air, just a flick of the hand and a shilling budded between his finger tips. He used to say the fairies did it.

"Wouldn't you, Uncle Samuel?" I asked.

"I would not, Bup," said he. "A nod's as good as a wink to a blind hoss. Just run along and ask Miss Bowditch for a box of vestas."

I went. Certainly the hatch was rather high for me and an accident might easily have happened, but Mr. Wentworth was very upset about his broken tumbler.

"You clumsy young clown," he blazed out, but my uncle briskly intervened.

"Pray excuse my young relative, sir," he said, with a ceremonious bow, "and allow me to make good the damage." He shook his head at me. "You should be more careful, Bup, more careful. Look where you're going." But from the click of his eyelid I guessed the fairies would be about all right.

"Take the gentleman's order, miss," he went on, "and if I may presume, sir, a double from the landlord's firkin will please any gentleman who knows what's what. Thirty years in the wood, sir."

"Really," said Mr. Wentworth, twirling his moustache, "that's very handsome of you, don't y'know. No Johnny likes to have his glass smashed to bally atoms before he's had his beak in it. 'Pon my word, I'm happy to accept, sir, what?"

Glass in hand, he followed my uncle to the window table.

"Your health, sir," said my uncle. "Staying long in Canchester?"

Mr. Wentworth put a thumb in the armhole of his waistcoat and smacked the side of his leg with his wanghee cane.

"Really, I can't say, sir," he returned, languidly. "Depends on circumstances. I ought to go north for the grouse, what? The glorious twelfth. Culverhame expects me, standing invitation, don't y'know? The old duke likes to see me, poor old chappie, but when sentiment intervenes——" He sighed. "The tender passion. Not to be denied, sir, not to be denied."

"Very handsome," said my uncle. "Does you credit, sir."

"When a fellow is hit, sir," protested Mr. Wentworth, "hard hit, he can't disguise his feelings, as my old friend Ormy—Sir Tancred Ormerod that is—by the way, do you know Sir Tancred?"

"By name," said my uncle. "Railway director, M.P. and so forth. That's all."

"Pity," said Mr. Wentworth, "you'd get on capitally, what? He's one of your own kidney, sir; a man of the world. Distinguished. Where was I? Oh, as Sir Tancred always says, 'W.W.,' he says, 'I'm never afraid to join you in any business. You're so open, so easy to read. If things weren't above board I'd see it in your face.' Poor old Ormy, he neglected my advice about Birkenhead Buildings and plumped for Calpurnian Gold. He dropped ten thou, sir, a cool ten thou!"

"Did he?" said my uncle. "Did he indeed? That's very peculiar. Drink that up and have another, sir."

I had finished my bun and milk and sat looking up the street at St. George's steeple. A flaw in the glass pane gave the weather-cock the appearance of hovering in mid-air over the spire. By moving my head a little from right to left I could make that pious fowl jump on and off its perch, a magic that kept me quite engrossed for some time.

When next I turned to listen, Mr. Wentworth was talking more loudly and eagerly. He was pinker and his eyes were brighter.

"You can take my word for it, laddie, that I'm pretty well up to snuff," I heard him say. "You've only to look up the quotation of Birkenhead Buildings in *The Times*. A hundred and forty-seven pounds you'll find it. I can buy them at par; par, mark you. You need only hold them a day and if you care to sell them you'll make forty-seven pounds profit on every hundred. Not to be sneezed at, what? Of course, they aren't issued to the public at that figure. The chairman of the company is an old chum of mine. Influence, my dear fellow, influence. Of course, I have to apply for them in my own name, but you've only to say the word."

"Very generous," said my uncle. "Very generous indeed, but why should you go out of your way to favour a stranger?"

Mr. Wentworth laid a hand upon his heart and declaimed with fervour:

"The moment I saw you, I cottoned to you at once, dear fellow. You're so like my grandfather. Friendship! Is anything more sacred? What shays the bard?

'The friends thou hast and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy heart with hook-iks, hookiks,
I should say "Hooksh" *of steel.'*"

He cleared his throat.

"'But, above all, to thine own shelf be true,
Thou can'st not then be falsh to any man.'"

He waved one hand in the air and bowed solemnly.

"God bless my soul," said my Uncle Samuel.

Mr. Wentworth grasped his wrist as it lay on the table.

"That is my reason for making you an offer that you are quick to call generous. There is no other reasom—reason for my interest in you. You cannot think otherwise, what?"

He spoke with great weight and emphasis. His eyes fixed on my uncle's face.

"It's a great temptation, sir," said my uncle, "I must think it over. I never do accept a favour without paying it back in the same coin. Come, Bup, it's time for your nosebag."

We were halfway through Fleshers' Alley before he spoke again.

"Very gentlemanly, ain't he, Bup?"

"Yes, Uncle," I returned. "He used to wear frogs on his coat like a soldier."

"Did he, Bup?" asked my uncle, with surprise.

I nodded.

"Yes, you can see the cloth is blacker where they used to be, uncle, and the shape of them too."

"Nothing wrong with your peepers, partner," he said and stopped beside an advertisement hoarding where he scanned the bills of soap and teas and theatrical announcements. He picked at the edge of

(*please turn over*)

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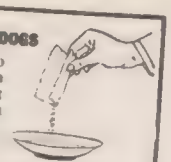

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He always called that grave, dry little man "Billiam."

"He is within, sir," said Mr. Clayton. "I will advise him. . . ."

At that moment, my father opened his office door.

"Uncle Sam for a tanner!" he said. "How are you, uncle?"

"Bobbish," said my uncle, "Bobbish. I've been talking to Mr. Wentworth."

"Ha!" said my father.

"Taking fellow, very," said my uncle. "Financier. Well in with Birkenhead Buildings. He can buy their shares at par and sell them at the market price, making forty-seven pounds on every share. Took to me, nephew. Likeness to his dear grandpa. Very peculiar! If I let him have the money in banknotes before he goes to town in a few days. . . ."

"Oh, Mr. Samuel," implored Mr. Clayton, "I beg you to reflect, I do indeed."

"Reflect," said my uncle. "Hair's falling out from it. I've been reflecting how soon he'll go to town!"

"Emily told dearest Clara that the banns are to be put up next Sunday," said my father. "She had it from Doctor Master's cook, who is keeping company with Mrs. Bigglestone's coachman."

"Marriage," said my Uncle Samuel and tapped his nose. "That gentleman's name is 'Walker, London.'"

"What do you suggest I should do?" asked my father. "Wych Tanneries advise me to-day that they have paid six thousand pounds to Mrs. Bigglestone's account at the Canchester bank, I cannot order the bank not to pay out on her cheque and they daren't refuse. If he receives the money and leaves for London I have no proof of dishonest intention and it will be too late to save her."

"When your fox goes to ground," said Uncle Samuel, "put in a terrier. Hounds won't help you. Got a pinch of snuff, Billiam?"

The clerk proffered his box.

"Thank'ee, thank'ee," said my uncle, tapping on the box.

"Terrier, terrier?" questioned my father, "That eludes me. What is your parable, uncle?"

"That," said my uncle, pulling out his handkerchief and crinkling his nose, "Arachoo! Terrier, Robert? That's your Uncle Samuel."

For two days I saw nothing of my uncle. Even I sensed something disturbing in the air; junior clerks peeping over gauze blinds to watch the street and Clayton making quiet, diplomatic journeys, to return to secret conclave with my father. I did not know then, but, remembering the man he was and the lights he lived by, I can see how the position must have chafed him in a dozen ways. In his very respectable practice the mere hint of police proceedings was abhorrent. Moreover, an incautious step against a clever rogue might involve him in an action for defamation, or libel. Yet his conscience would not let him rest. However strongly he might suspect Mr. Wentworth, he had nothing specific to bring against him, and the widow was so dazzled by her genteel admirer that she resented every counsel of prudence.

Looking back, I can see that my father was reduced to gathering what information he could and to hoping that something might come to light on which he could act, before the irrevocable step had been taken.

He delayed informing Mrs. Bigglestone of the payment to her account, but gained little from that, for Mr. Wentworth, himself, came in during the afternoon with a note from the lady.

I have that note still, gleaned from the archives of the firm.

"Mrs. Sarah Bigglestone presents her compliments to Mr. Robert Chapman," it ran, "and will be glad to know when the tannery has paid up immediate, as she is desirous of investing the money to greater advantage as soon as possible." The lady ended this incongruous missive in the best traditions of the grocery, "Yours to command, S. Bigglestone (Mrs.)"

That allowed of no further delay. The money was in the bank, ready to be paid on any formal demand.

A boy was sent in search of my Uncle Samuel, but he had driven out in his high dog-cart that morning. No one knew where he had gone or when he would return. My father sent a junior clerk to watch the bank and when at last it closed without a visit from the widow, or her friend, he doubtless breathed more freely for the short respite.

"I would be glad to know where Uncle Samuel is," he said to my mother, at tea that day.

"I hope we should be," she said, "but one never knows in what company *he* finds himself. Still," she added, generously, "I do admit that at times he has been most helpful."

The next morning, my father deputed Roger Kemp, an articled pupil, to watch the bank and, since the young man was not familiar with Mr. Wentworth's appearance, I was sent to keep him company.

We had been there barely an hour, in Fleshers' Alley, when Mrs. Bigglestone's victoria drove up to the bank. Mr. Wentworth handed the lady out with gallantry and Roger doubled back to the office to carry the news, leaving me in the street.

"Excuse me mentioning it, but have you tried putting soap into your washing water?"

"I'm not saying who took my umbrella, but Nellie Wallace was here for lunch!"

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Near as his office was, my father would have been too late to witness the ensuing spectacle, had not the lady been accosted by Mrs. Priddie, the confectioner.

That good woman, quite unable to restrain her curiosity about the distinguished gentleman her former neighbour had brought back from Kingsgate, advanced boldly to greet them.

"Why, Sarah, my dear," said she, "you're quite a stranger. I haven't set eyes on you for a month of Sundays."

"Really, Mrs. Priddie," said Mrs. Bigglestone, who had been cultivating the idiom of society. "I don't know why you should, what?"

"What 'what?'" said Mrs. Priddie, "*I* don't forget old neighbours. I'd like to have a guinea for every time you and me have had a cup of tea together in my parlour." She glanced archly at Mr. Wentworth, twirling his moustache at his lady's side. "There's a kettle on the hob now, Sarah, and the Chelseas will be just warm from the bakehouse. Perhaps you and your friend . . ."

"Won't you introduce me, my love?" asked Mr. Wentworth.

"Mrs. Priddie, the baker," said Mrs. Bigglestone, toying with her parasol. "We have business at the bank, Mrs. Priddie."

"Clara, as always, to you," corrected that lady, with asperity. "Happy to meet any friend of Sarah's, Mr. Wentworth. I hear we'll be seeing a lot more of you in Canchester."

"As to that, ma'am," said Mr. Wentworth, "I am going up to town to-day, financial business, don't y'know, board meetings, directors and so forth. Deucedly boring, what? I shall be back in a few days and then . . ." He patted Mrs. Bigglestone's wrist fondly, "then we shall see what we shall see, really, 'pon my honour. Eh, Sarah, my pet, won't we?"

With a magnificent wave of his grey top hat he turned to escort his lady through the bank portals just as my father came up with his hat on the back of his head and a quill behind his ear, looking less like a respectable solicitor and town clerk than I have ever seen him. I followed him into the bank where he hurled himself at the first teller's desk, winning by a short head from Mrs. Bigglestone and her escort, and engaged that cashier in earnest conversation. As the second teller's desk was unattended, he probably thought to delay payment, so far as it lay in his power, trusting that an inscrutable providence might yet strike a blow for the three little fatherless Bigglestones.

After a few seconds' wait Mr. Wentworth rapped peremptorily on the mahogany.

"Counter!" he cried, masterfully. "Counter! This lady and I cannot wait here all day, don't y'know."

That brought old Gillespie, the second teller, from the back.

"Your pleasure, sir?" said he.

"This cheque," returned Mr. Wentworth.

Gillespie put on his spectacles and scrutinised it.

"You are Mr. Wentworth, Mr. Willoughby Wentworth?" he asked, anxiously.

"Ask this lady," said that gentleman. "The cheque is drawn on her account."

"Of course he is," said Mrs. Bigglestone, "and it is time you knew my signature. Call the manager, at once."

The manager, as I learned afterwards, was watching the scene through a spy hole rubbed in the ground-glass partition of his private office.

"And this is your endorsement?" continued old Gillespie, unmoved.

"Written with my own fair hand," said Mr. Wentworth, with heavy irony. "You had better obey this lady and call your master. It seems that you are unused to dealing with more than two-figure amounts. To me six thousand is a mere bagatelle, what?"

"Yes, yes," assented Gillespie and opened a drawer. Setting a pile of buff envelopes beside him he poured a shovelful of sovereigns into the pan of his scales.

"Look here," said Mr. Wentworth, "I can't take it in gold, my man."

"I have not sufficient notes," said Gillespie. "Gold is legal tender to any amount and I must ask you to accept it."

At this masterstroke, as he firmly believed, of providence, my father dropped all pretence of transacting business.

The manager was sent for. Mrs. Bigglestone stormed. She would withdraw her account. She had never been so treated. She would tell her friends. She would consult her lawyer. She turned to appeal to my father.

The manager was sorry but firm. The money could only be paid in gold. He regretted that they could not spare notes. The metal would be heavy to remove, but unless Mr. Wentworth would prefer to wait till to-morrow, there was no other way of paying the amount.

"Very well," said Mrs. Bigglestone, "we will be back in five minutes. I am sorry, Willoughby, that my bank is such a dud, but we can get a small tin trunk at Mr. Tice's and that will cook these people's goose." She glanced vindictively at my father. "There's some folk," said she, "who are going to laugh on the wrong side of their faces before we've finished, my dear."

We all waited till the victoria returned with a new japanned tin trunk on the front seat, and a number of worthy citizens had, by that time, business at the bank or else elected to stroll up and down outside.

"Get on with your work," said Mr. Wentworth, shortly, as he set the trunk upon the counter, "and remember I am keeping an eye on you." He turned to the widow. "It is fine to be marrying such a practical little woman, Sally."

The counting proceeded with deliberation, fifty sovereigns to a bag, a hundred and twenty bags of them. It took quite a time.

Mr. Wentworth himself packed them in the box and when they were all stowed he had to get two idlers from the street corner to transport the trunk to the carriage.

It made an impressive procession. Mrs. Bigglestone, stepping jauntily, swinging her parasol in triumph, the treasure chest with its two bearers and Mr. Wentworth following, as rear guard.

At the door he turned. Staff and customers stared after him in staggered silence. My father, clawing at his whiskers, seemed upon the point of apoplexy.

Mr. Wentworth raised his hat in mocking salute.

"It is a far, far, better thing," he said. "In spite of our immortal Dickens, gentlemen, 'It is a far, far, better thing that I do now, than I have ever done before.' I wish you all a very good morning."

At that moment I heard the sound of a coaching horn in High Street. It was not nearly time for the Paston coach and I ran into the street half expecting to find Mr. Wentworth's own private equipage, with footmen and outriders, arriving to carry him off to London by road, instead of railway.

What I did see was my great uncle

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Samuel's high dog-cart approaching at a spanking pace and behind it a wagonette which contained some dozen adults of both sexes, and bore between two wands a banner which read: "Bootle's Baby." Music was provided by a corneteer.

My great-uncle pulled the mare to her haunches in a flicker of shining leather, twinkling metal and polished hoofs.

"Slipper!" he called to a corner boy lounging at the sunny angle of the street, "hold her head a jiffy," and standing up he waved his whip towards Mrs. Biggle-stone's victoria. "There, my hearties," he cried, "is that your missing stage manager?"

"That's him," came multi-voiced from the wagonette, which promptly boiled excited humanity over its edges.

At that, Mr. Wentworth, gracefully poised on the step of the victoria, looked up, saw and, without further ado, bolted down the street with amazing celerity.

"Yoicks!" cried my uncle and cupped his hands round his mouth. "Tally, tally ho!"

Seeing me at his off-side step, he leaned over and hauled me up.

"Now for the chase, Bup," he said, gleefully. "Let her go, Slipper."

From our high seat we saw the chase unroll along the winding street; Mr. Wentworth well ahead, and, clamorous behind him, little men and big, long and short-haired men with hats flung behind them and coat-tails flying. Even the womenfolk joined in. A slim and fair-haired girl, with her skirts most indecorously caught in the crook of her elbow, showed a surprising turn of speed.

Never in my life have I seen the High Street so brisk and bustling.

A short laugh broke from my uncle.

"Look to Judy," he cried. "Yoicks!" And he eased in to the kerb as one veteran of the pack held him up.

"Laddie," gasped the old actor, "for the love of Mike watch the pretty girl in front. She's a good girl, clever, plays little Eva. Keep her out of trouble, laddie. She'll scratch his eyes out."

The warning was unnecessary. Her shoes and her dress were too big a handicap. Fifty yards on, we passed little Eva, faint but pursuing in her stockinged feet, with determination in her wide, blue eyes and a high-heeled shoe in her hand.

They pinned their fox at Simon's Gate, where the old stone bridge spans the Wych.

When we drove up the hounds were on the quarry.

"This belongs to the troupe," cried one, snatching the grey topper.

"So does his coat," shouted another. "He's only taken the frogs off."

"What've you done with the money, you villain?" chorused the company.

"Empty his pockets, if there's anything in them," called my uncle, with tears of merriment running down his cheeks.

A well-concerted heave and a mighty splash brought down the curtain. Divested of all but shirt and sponge bag trousers, Mr. Willoughby Wentworth was left to wade along the placid stream to what asylum he might find, while the rest of the company returned in jubilant procession about the dog-cart, triumphantly flourishing the spoils of the chase, as some small compensation for a rifled treasury.

At the bank we found my father with burnt feathers and sal volatile, vainly trying to assuage Mrs. Bigglestone's grief, as she sat resolutely upon her tin trunk and refused to be comforted.

For a few seconds, my old uncle stood thoughtfully regarding the widow. At last he spoke.

"It's a quarter after twelve," he said, incisively. "The London train has gone, and if it weren't for the good work of these fellows, you'd have nothing left to sit on, ma'am."

"Oh," she sobbed, "I'm only a weak woman, an unprotected widow. I've been cruelly deceived. I've been a fool."

"You have, ma'am," said my uncle.

That bland agreement, in place of the soothing excuses my father had been making for her, roused her to reality.

"But what am I to do?" she asked, turning to my uncle.

"Get up and have that box taken inside," he told her, "and thank your lucky stars I tipped the bank the wink to pay that rogue in gold."

A minute later, the treasure chest was behind the protecting grille of the bank counter. Action had dried the lady's tears without allaying her anger.

"Well, there it is," she said. "He didn't get a penny of it and no one else won't, neither."

"Oh, yes, they will, ma'am," said my uncle. "And soon, too."

"And why, Mr. Chapman, pray?" she demanded. "I've had my lesson."

"You have," he said, "but you haven't paid for it." He waved a hand towards the troupe. "These ladies and gentlemen of the 'Bootle's Baby' company have come here at great expense and trouble to unmask the villain of your tragedy. No others could do it and they have been cheated by him, too. They lost their money, but they saved you yours. Gratitude, ma'am, gratitude."

"How much did they lose?" she asked. "Sixty pounds," said my uncle. "In hard cash. And to-day, of course . . ."

"No one shall say Sarah Bigglestone's mean," said the lady. "Unlock that box!"

Mr. Gillespie coughed.

"Mr.—er—Wentworth has the key," said he.

"Give me a cheque," said Mrs. Biggle-stone, firmly.

In silence she filled it in and pushed it through the grille.

"In notes?" asked Gillespie.

"In gold," she returned, with decision.

Taking the two bags of fifty sovereigns each, she handed them to the oldest of the actors.

"I'm greatly beholden to you all," she said. "You have been my salvation."

The old actor raised the grey topper previously sported by Mr. Wentworth.

"Lady," he said, "your munificence will be recorded in gold upon the tablets of our memory. In the name of one and all, I thank you. Eh, what's that, Till?" He bent his head to a colleague's whispered suggestion. "My friend, Tillotson Dela-field, madam, has just reminded me that we must eat before we return. We would welcome you to our board at some adjacent hostelry."

"Really," said the lady, bridling, "I shall have much pleasure if I may pay the bill."

"No, ma'm, no," said my uncle Samuel "That will be my privilege."

My uncle looked in at tea-time that day, to explain things to my father.

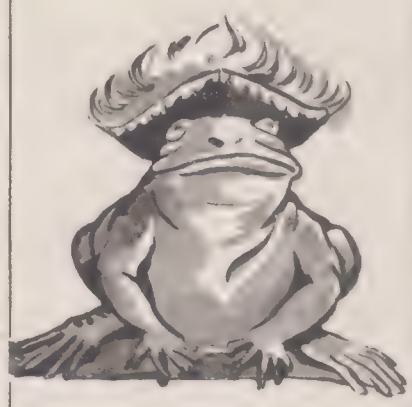
"Got the fellow tight at the Fleece," he began. "Best way I know to find a chap's quality. You know the financial deal he offered me, and I guessed the widow had fallen for it, but it was his quoting Shakespeare that put me on the track. Then Mick twigged the marks where the frogs had been on his coat and but for that, I might never have got on the right scent. Looked up the old bills on the hoarding and came on 'Bootle's Baby' officers in mess kit and the rest of it. Trailed the company to Beach-bourne, Robert, and we didn't spare our cattle coming back."

My father gave a sigh of relief.

"Clever work, uncle," he said, admir-ingly. "It has been a most disturbing episode. Most disturbing. I hope that woman sees the error of her ways. Her hysteria after that bounder fled was very embarrassing. I could do nothing with her."

"Ah, nephew," said my old uncle, smoothing the set of his white stock tie, "you're famous at law, no one better, but, it's very peculiar, when it comes to handling women, you have to trust your old bachelor uncle!"

NEXT WEEK

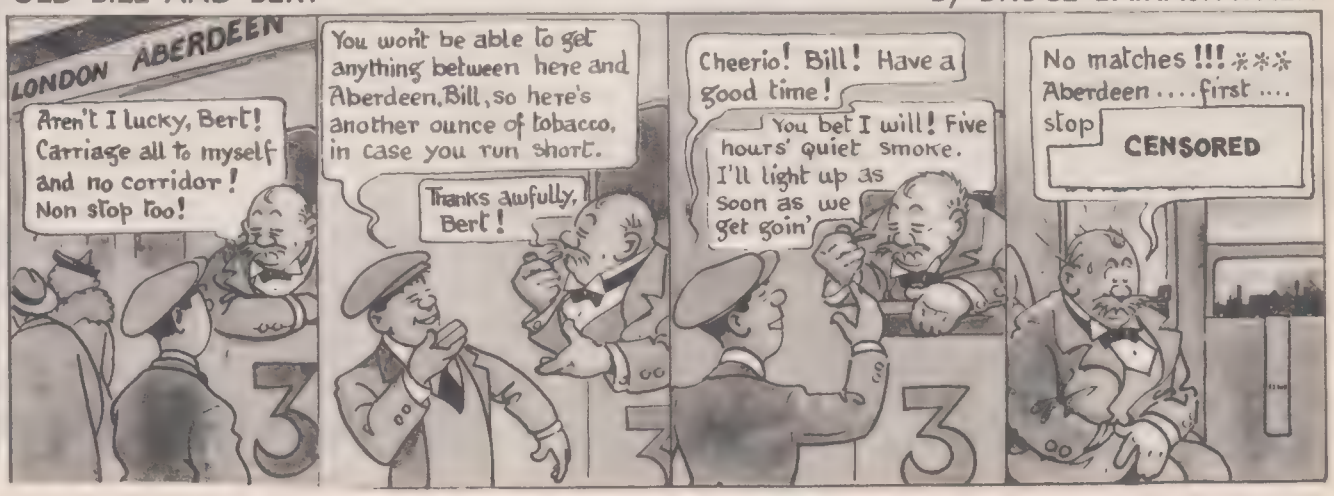


THE MAYOR OF MUDHAM

was a big frog in his own puddle . . . but where Film Stars were concerned the Mayoress was one jump ahead until

DELICATE MISSIONS LIMITED, led by BELVEDERE TIPP, took a hand

OLD BILL AND BERT — By BRUCE BAIRNSFATHER



NO SOAP SHAVEX NO BRUSH

REVOLUTION IN SHAVING

Millions are now using SHAVEX all over the World. Beware of Imitations

Throw away your soap and brush and use the up-to-date method of shaving which takes a quarter of the time. We guarantee that one can have a perfect shave in two minutes with Shavex.

MR. IVOR NOVELLO,
the celebrated author and composer, writes: "'Shavex' is a really splendid invention. I am so often asked to recommend preparations and can so seldom do so, but in this case my appreciation of your 'Shavex' is genuine. I shall always use it."

MR. LESLIE HENSON,
the famous actor, writes: "I use 'Shavex' every time I shave, and think it is the quickest, cleanest and most delightful preparation ever invented for shaving."

SHAVEX is without doubt the most perfect way of Shaving that man can desire. What is more simple than just wetting the beard and smearing on a little Shavex—and then a perfect Shave? Shavex contains Almond Oil which is a fine skin food for the face. You shave in a quarter of the time that is taken by any other method, and you rub the rest of the Shavex into the skin—this takes away the wrinkles and keeps the face in a perfect condition. Fancy every day scrubbing one's face with very hot water and soap full of soda. One has only one's face for a lifetime and it should be treated kindly. OILS in SHAVEX will keep the face young and without wrinkles, and after shaving you will always feel as fresh as a daisy. The Shavex Cream makes the bristles of the beard stand up, when they are easily shaved with the razor. The ordinary creams and soaps flatten the beard, and so it is impossible to get the perfect shave. If grass is lying down it is more difficult for the mower to cut than if it is standing up. It is the same with the beard and Shavex. SHAVEX gets between all the hairs and forces the beard to stand up, and one can cut it so easily and get a perfect shave.

TRY A SHAVEX BLADE, THE KEENEST AND BEST BLADE ON THE MARKET. PRICE 2d. INSTEAD of 4d.

MR. JACK BUCHANAN,
the great actor producer, writes: "I find 'Shavex' absolutely perfect for shaving. It is most refreshing and so easy, and it gives me the best shave I have ever had."

MR. RALPH LYNN,
the well-known actor, writes: "I consider 'Shavex' really splendid for shaving. It leaves the face soft and sweet, also removes the beard better than any shaving soap."

SHAVEX is sold in 6d. 1/- & 1/6 Tubes and 1/6 Pots

Obtainable from all Chemists and Stores or direct from:
SHAVEX ZEE-KOL CO. LTD., (Dept. R25)
40 Blenheim Road, Upper Holloway, N.19

ZEE-KOL (BRAND) HEALS SKIN DISEASES IN A NIGHT

THESE ARE ONLY A FEW OF THE SACKFULS OF ZEE-KOL TESTIMONIALS

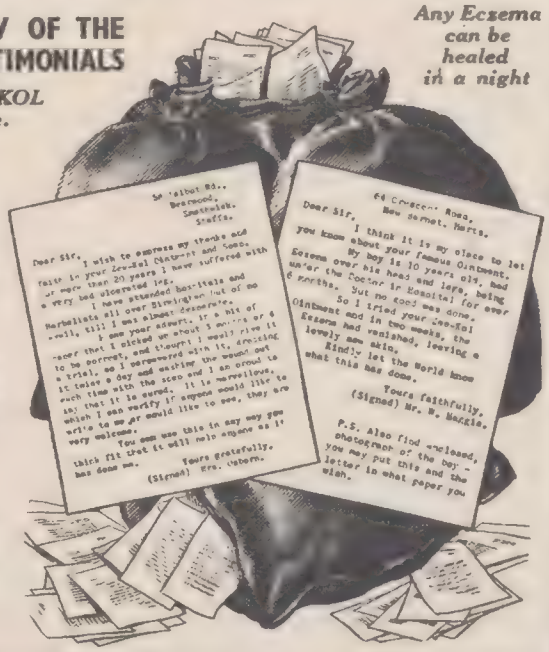
They claim that ZEE-KOL acts like a miracle.

ECZEMA
"I suffered from Eczema all over my face and body. I applied Zee-Kol and in three days the Eczema had gone."

VARICOSE AND OTHER ULCERS
"For years I could not walk with Ulcerated Leg. Zee-Kol healed it in a week."

ABSCESSES
Zee-Kol instantly draws out all inflammation and the abscess is healed in twenty-four hours.

Any Eczema can be healed in a night



ZEE-KOL is without doubt the most wonderful skin remedy of all time. The cruellest skin diseases, such as Ulcers, Eczema, Abscesses, etc., are rapidly and completely banished, and Pimples, Blackheads, Boils, Rashes, etc., disappear like magic. Never was known any remedy like Zee-Kol. Where it touches, the skin takes on a finer and healthier glow. Zee-Kol kills all germs that enter the skin—that is why it heals the moment it touches the skin. It destroys everything unhealthy to the skin. No skin disease can resist it. Forget it being a Patent Medicine. This is the only way we have of letting the world know of Zee-Kol's marvellous power of skin healing. There is nothing in the world to compare with Zee-Kol. Do not hesitate. Go straight to your chemist and get a box of Zee-Kol and rest absolutely assured that your skin troubles will speedily be banished.

Zee-Kol heals in record time. Eczema, all kinds of Ulcers, Chilblains, Leg Troubles, Severe Burns, etc.

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6d., 1/3, and 3/-

or direct from
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"I can sincerely say that Zee-Kol Almond Oil Soap is the most beautiful soap for the complexion I have ever used."
MISS PHYLLIS DARE.

"Your Zee-Kol Soap is excellent for the skin and so perfect that all my friends will hear of this wonderful Soap."
MISS FAY COMPTON.

"Doge Cream is a really delightful cream, exceptionally soothing to the skin and wonderful for the complexion." *MISS LILIAN BRAITHWAITE*

ZEE-KOL *Almond Oil* SOAP

Creates Beauty and Preserves Beauty and has a Beautiful Lingering Perfume.

A REVELATION in transforming the worst skin in three nights into a most beautiful satiny and peachlike complexion. Never before has a soap of this description been given to the public. It is made of the purest oils.

One must not think of the cheap 3d. tablets of soap when thinking of Zee-Kol Almond Oil Soap.

This is the wholesale price of the materials used in most of the advertised soaps.

PALM OIL costs 4d. per lb.
ALMOND OIL costs 5/6 per lb.

Compare this price to Almond Oil, which is 5/6 per lb. and which is used in Zee-Kol Almond Oil Soap.

It is easily seen why Zee-Kol Almond Oil Soap is the most expensive to make, as it is very rare to get Almond Oil in a soap at all. The price of Almond Oil will prove to everyone that there is no soap in the world so marvellous as Zee-Kol Almond Oil Soap.

1/- Large Tablet NOW 6d.

DOGE CREAM

Miss MARY LAWSON, the lovely English stage and screen star, writes: *"I use Doge Cream because I cannot afford a complexion less than perfect and I know of nothing else that keeps the skin so smooth, fresh and beautiful."*

THE MARVELLOUS COMPLEXION RESTORER with its most glorious perfume.

HOWEVER sallow or patchy your complexion may be we guarantee to make it perfect with Doge Cream. It works miracles on the skin and is the most ideal complexion cream on the market. Doge Cream is not a vanishing cream. It does not dry up the skin, but keeps the skin supple, firm and youthful.

When thinking of other face creams, remember that Doge Cream is not like any of these.

It is the most remarkable and the most perfect cream that has ever been blended. It contains Almond Oil which is the most expensive oil you can use in a face cream, and does not grow hair. It preserves the skin and takes away all wrinkles and leaves the skin smooth as a child's. It was taken from an old Venetian recipe, and has a beautiful perfume that lingers over the skin until it is washed away. Over a thousand of the leading Society women use Doge Cream.

"I think Doge Cream is a really remarkably fine cream. It is wonderful for the skin and keeps the complexion perfect. I shall be very happy to recommend it." *Miss IRENE VANBRUGH.*

"I find Doge Cream perfectly delightful. It keeps the skin so smooth and refreshed, also keeps it in a wonderful condition. I will always use it."—Miss MARIE LOHR.

"Zee-Kol Almond Oil Soap is wonderful for the skin. It keeps it so smooth and soothes it so much. I will recommend it always." *Miss RENEE KELLY.*

IN TUBES **6D. & 9D.**
IN POTS **1/- & 2/-**

Doge Cream and Zee-Kol Soap are perfect together.

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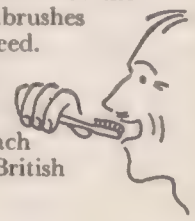
Healthy exercise is just as important for your mouth as for the rest of your body. The springy bristles of Halex Toothbrushes give your teeth and gums just the exercise they need.

THREE SHAPES AT A SHILLING
—short-head, long-head, and one with a tuft at the end. Other prices 6d to 2/-. Nine shapes in all. Each brush hygienically sealed, made in England by The British Xylonite Company Ltd., Hale End, London, E.4.



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for your first exercise in the morning and your last exercise at night

CURLS without CURLERS

Make Your Own Curls

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What fun it is using this clever Pro-Curler! And what a thrill you'll get out of your skill in putting in curls for yourself just when, where and how you want them! No heat, no steam, no risk . . . and only one curler to use. Light, almost invisible curl grips keep hair in position while it takes up the wave. A few days' use of the Pro-Curler makes you a real expert. Suits all types of hair, all styles of hairdressing with curls, ringlets, rolls or waves. Think how much you will save, how much longer your perms will last, and how much happier and more confident you will always be about your appearance when you have your Pro-Curler handy. Be sure to get one to-day.

Obtainable from all leading Stores, Chemists, Hairdressers, and Boots

Pro-Curler

If you experience any difficulty in finding a stockist write to Pro Products, Mount Royal, Marble Arch London, W.1.

5/- COMPLETE WITH 48 CURL GRIPS

NE-TEB *Artificial Nails*

Nails have a habit of breaking before an important engagement, that is why a box of Ne-Teb indetectable artificial nails, which can be applied at home, is indispensable.

Enough for both hands in a 5/9 box, post free.

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THE PERFECT COMPLEXION

Has NO Shiny NOSE or FACE

Shine spoils the most perfect complexion or make-up. A shiny nose or face has worried my Lady throughout the ages. But to-day Elvira's NOshiNO banishes the risk of face shine and prevents PORE CLOGGING and ENLARGED PORES, often the result of continuous powdering. Moreover it allows that attractive peach-like bloom. 2 drops of NOshiNO applied in the morning or before a dance will keep you shine-free for 7-8 hours. Many genuine unsolicited appreciations prove our statement.

British Made

1/- and 2/6 *Dressing Table Size*

THE ORIGINAL COLOURLESS, ODOURLESS, HARMLESS, ANTI-SHINE.

Buy a 1/- handbag size to-day

NO ELVIRA'S SHINO

from BOOTS, TIMOTHY WHITES', HEPPELLS, LEWIS AND BURROWS and all Chemists, Stores, Hairdressers, or post free from ELVIRA CO., LTD., 23, Hanson Street, London, W.1

Crossing the Tweed

I'M writing this in the Midnight Scot, travelling back from Glasgow where I've been paying a flying visit to the Empire Exhibition. I'm only sorry that my stay was so short, for I could have nosed around that Exhibition for days and days.

As it was I felt I simply had to concentrate on the more womanly side, although I did manage to see quite a lot of wheels go round in the Palace of Engineering.

This spacious pavilion is a paradise for small boys, and those grown boys who are fathers—and grandfathers! I saw one six-year-old curled up fast asleep on one of the stands behind a large piece of machinery, with a look of complete contentment on his face.

I managed, too, to see, although speedily (you can take little cars which rapidly get you from place to place) the two Scottish pavilions and the Palace of Arts, the United Kingdom Pavilion and the Palace of Industry. And I looked round many of the Pavilions of the Dominions. They're all worth far more time than I had to give them and I hope only that I'll be back in Glasgow before the Exhibition ends, to see more.

As you enter the Exhibition grounds, the panorama is really most fascinating, for the whole thing is beautifully laid out.

Most impressive of all is the view from the 300 feet high tower, standing on the top of the 200 feet high Bellahouston Hill. You can see 80 miles across Scotland Away to the north are the Highlands, the estuary of the Clyde to the west and Glasgow, with its streets and factories, to the south-west.

Now I must tell you about the women of the Empire Pavilion. Their first exhibit is devoted to handicrafts, which have been contributed from women of the Empire. You can see the most beautiful work of Englishwomen and the almost unbelievable stitchery of Indian women. Embroideries of every description, much of it looking almost too good to be true, are exhibited and there is hand-printed and hand-woven textiles. Hand-quilting, jewellery and metal work are only a few of the many handicrafts contributed by women of the Empire.

Then there are exhibitions of cooking. Demonstrators are only too willing to answer questions and show you exactly how things are done. I spent too long here; it's fascinating watching people make a few ordinary ingredients into the most toothsome-looking cakes.

And on to the Fashion Theatre. Here it was brought home to me again—as it has been before, in London—how really lovely quite inexpensive materials can look if they're nicely made and the style is carefully chosen.

All the materials used in the gowns displayed by the mannequins, were British and many of them quite cheap. But most of them had been made by some of the best-known designers.

There was a charming evening dress made in cotton piqué, in shades of petunia, blue and green on a white background. It had a wide belt of pleated cotton velveteen in bright magenta and the bolero and hem of the skirt were also made in this material.

The retail price of the piqué is 1s. 11½d. a yard and the velveteen, which is washable, is 4s. 11d. per yard. And you could have gone anywhere in that dress.

The most popular colour scheme was green and wine colour, which look lovely together. So if you have a green suit why not cheer it up with deep wine-coloured accessories. Another touch I noticed about the suits was that in one or two cases a shirt blouse was worn with a bow tie. It looked really smart. Anyway, I'm going into an outfitter's to buy a made-up bow-tie to wear with my tweed suit as soon as I get back to London.

Also, I noticed that in the corner of the lining of a sports suit were appliquéd two small Scottish terriers. And a whisper

VIRGINIA HALL'S PAGE

went round the audience, "Ah! Look at they wee dogs!"

I came away from the Fashion Theatre (and, indeed, from Scotland) with the impression that nearly every Scot has brown eyes, that the women are a long way behind Londoners in hairdressing—but oh, how they can wear their tweeds.

I've never seen so many well-dressed tweed-clad women in my life. And lastly how friendly were those Glasgow mannequins. You should have seen us all in the Amusement Park!

While I was in Glasgow I got a recipe for a reader who wrote asking whether I knew of a good recipe for shortbread. And as other readers might like to know how to make real Scottish shortbread, too, here is the recipe straight from the horse's mouth, so to speak!

Ingredients: ¼ lb. sugar, ½ lb. salt butter, 14 oz. plain flour, 2 oz. rice flour.

Put the sifted sugar and butter on a baking-board and knead it with the hand until it is the consistency of putty. Mix the plain flour and the rice flour together and gradually work it into the butter and sugar, handful by handful, keeping the lump firm.

Cut it in two, take one piece and knead it with the knuckles of the right hand while you keep it in shape with the left. Roll slightly, making it about ½ inch thick, pinch the edges and fork the cake over. Do the same with the other half.

To prevent the cakes from breaking, work them on cooking-paper, so that they can be very gently placed in the oven (which must be hot), until they are a nice brown colour.

Ever since I can remember, Margaret has bitten her nails. I can remember her absolutely gnawing at them when we were occupied with a maths. problem at school, yet when I met her the other day she had lovely almond shaped nails tipping her rather beautiful fingers, which before had always been completely spoiled by her nails.

I was even more surprised when in reply to my astonished gaze she said, "Oh, they're not my *own* nails. They're stuck on; but I don't bite them, so I'm being cured of my nail-gnawing habit!"

And right enough, those nails were actually stuck over her own. It really is a good idea. If you break the top of a nail right off or have some sort of deformed nails, these artificial "fittings" are so very natural looking.

You can buy a set of them for 5s. 6d. All you have to do is to file the sides and base to fit evenly to the shape of your own nail, bend them so that they fit firmly over the nails and then glue them on to your own nail. These artificial nails can be varnished in the ordinary way.

When your own nail grows up underneath, the artificial ones can be removed with nail varnish remover. They are unbreakable and non-inflammable, too, so if you're one of those people who feels as if you should always sit on your hands to keep them out of sight, try this new aid to hand beauty. For more particulars, write to me, marking your envelope "Nails."

Someone else with a shiny nose always makes me bring out my powder puff in case mine is shining like a beacon, too. Only the other day I was having lunch with a friend, when another girl took one of the vacant chairs at our table. Her nose was gleaming. In fact, her whole face looked as though she'd spent some time actually polishing it. I instinctively took to my powder, but found that my nose wasn't so bad.

My friend, seeing me powdering my nose, and realising what had made me do it, immediately began telling me about some preparation that prevents red or shiny noses. You should have seen how that shiny-faced girl pricked up her ears, and I'm quite sure that when she'd finished her lunch she went straight off to buy some.

It is a colourless, odourless, harmless liquid preparation, specially made for the prevention of a shiny or red nose, blotches and greasy skin. It is also good for enlarged pores. A free liquid, it prevents pore-clogging and it gives a lasting matt finish to the skin.

All you have to do is to apply a little to the skin, just as you would vanishing cream. Then powder your nose, which will remain without shine for many hours.

It is sold in half-crown bottles, which will last for ages because you use such a small quantity at a time. There is, also, a handbag size at 1s. and if you are interested I have arranged to have one of these sent to you post free or receipt of a shilling. Please mark envelopes "Matt."

Until the other day I had never thought that those flower vases shaped like rings or squares or crescents, which are really for little flowers or flower heads, would be suitable for taller flowers.

Then I saw a most attractive arrangement on a friend's table. She had three circular, pink ring-vases, one rather larger than the other two. In these she had arranged London Pride.

She had picked it just below the cap-like cluster of leaves from which the flowers grow and had placed them in the rings with the feathery pink flowers standing up all round.

If you are interested in any of the things mentioned in these pages, please write to Virginia Hall, c/o "The Passing Show," 92 Long Acre, W.C.2, for she is very willing to help.

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ROUND the world, "Cooltan" is the recognised way for Men, Girls and Kiddies to get a quick, rich, *natural* Sun Tan. Marvellously increasing and glorifying the Sun's Tan-ray action, while cutting off all the harmful rays, "Cooltan" *definitely* assures the richest, most even and most *handsome* Tan ever! Whatever the weather, "Cooltan" is the most effective known aid to healthy, care-free outdoor enjoyment. REAL protection—without dye to streak the skin or grease to grow hair.

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WORLD WITHOUT TIME

W. J. PASSINGHAM

continues his fascinating serial story of Ooloom by describing how the lost explorers were led to the Mirror of Truth

WHO'S WHO IN THE STORY

SAM KILLICK, a journalist, is describing what happened when he was a member of a cruising party, sailing the southern seas in the yacht, *Solar Star*, which was in charge of

CAPTAIN JOHN BARLEY, a grey-haired, grey-eyed veteran, who realised something had gone wrong with the world when all laws of navigation were upset by a storm that wrecked the yacht's radio and disabled her engines. Meanwhile,

JAMES HENRY WENDERBY, twenty-six-year-old millionaire-owner of the *Solar Star*, who is trying to forget the tragic death of his parents, and his friends,

"TINY MILTON," gigantic in stature and in good nature, and Wenderby's cousin, sinister

DOCTOR GEORGE THORMANSON, whose brilliance as a scientist is outweighed by his greed, are surprised when a plane lands to leeward of the yacht and reveals

SALLY ALTON, noted girl flier and one of America's most photographed women, and her secretary

NINA LENNOX, another beauty. They started out on a long-distance flight, but the difficulties in navigation caused by the storm were too much for them, and they were lost when they sighted the yacht. Eventually, the *Solar Star* drifts to the Antarctic continent and a party goes ashore to explore. Thormanson finds a great stone door leading into a strange new land where they meet a giant. He introduces himself as

EENOON, and is trying to explain that they are in "O-o-o-l-o-o-o-m" when Thormanson shoots another of the giants. Killick snatches the revolver and starts a fight which comes to an end when yet another giant separates them and hands Thormanson a large diamond.

THORMANSON stared at the magnificent diamond, like a man unable to credit the evidence of his senses, and I could see, when our eyes met, that he still did not understand. He who had fired a gun and wounded a man had expected retribution, and instead was rewarded by the gift of that very thing he desired. The moral of it escaped him entirely, it seemed, and the contempt I strove to convey troubled him not at all.

"Well, I'm damned!" was all he said and gradually his fear changed to triumph. As the possibilities and the significance of it all dawned upon him, I saw his expression change to greed. "I knew it—knew it all the time, Killick!" he gabbled. "There were traces of blue clay all the way from the ship. The nearer you go towards that volcano over there the more

ILLUSTRATED BY
T. GRAINGER JEFFREY

blue clay you'll find. And blue clay means diamonds! This one shows they know something about polishing the stones, and there must be plenty about here if they give 'em away. I wonder where . . .? Say, can you make these freaks understand English?"

Those blows I had struck, the insults I had hurled at him were all forgotten at sight of the diamond.

"What made you fire that gun?" I demanded. "These people mean no harm to us."

"I didn't understand," he answered, sullenly. "They crowded too close around me. I warned them. It was their own fault."

"You low, dirty cur, Thormanson!" I snarled. "You treacherous, cowardly swine! Your hide's so thick, your nose so close to the ground, that you can't see the shame you've brought upon us all. Give that diamond back, or I'll break every bone in your body!"

"Are you crazy?" he asked, hoarsely. "Can't you understand what the blue clay—the diamonds mean? We're rich men—every one of us, if we can get away with it, and these big stiffs are too slow to stop us taking what we want."

"Is that so!" a grim voice said from behind me and when I whirled round, Tiny Milton was there, holding the gun I had wrenched from Thormanson.

I could see that Tiny was not himself as he glared at the man he had always hated. "Listen you," he went on, and I saw Thormanson stiffen at the menace in those tones. "You're proud of all those brains, aren't you? Well, hand that diamond back where it came from, or I'll blow the whole damned lot of 'em clean out of your head. Get busy!"

While Thormanson hesitated the gun in Tiny's hand exploded and he let out a startled yell. Tiny levelled the gun again, and this time he looked so determined that I jumped forward to restrain him. As I did so Thormanson dropped the big diamond into the hand of the giant from whom he had received it. I noticed abstractedly that the huge hand was still in the act of closing, and marvelled at the slow motion which seemed to persist even in the most trying circumstances. But my attention was concentrated upon Thormanson and not until he had returned that diamond did my vigilance relax.

George's eyes were set in a cold stare of hatred now. "Don't imagine that this affair is finished, Milton," he said, thickly. "No man can do what both you and Killick have done to me and get away with it. I'll have all the diamonds I want before I leave this place and you won't stop me!"

"Listen!" Tiny warned in low tones. "If they really want to give you diamonds I don't wish to stop them. But when it comes to staging a hold-up to get what you want I shall interfere. I heard and saw all that passed between you and Sam, and I agree with everything he said and did to you. For myself—if ever you molest, or injure one of these helpless, inoffensive people here again, I'll kill you. I mean it!"

"Don't talk like that, Tiny," Jimmy Wenderby's voice protested sharply just then. "You can't kill a man here, or anywhere else for that matter. There's always the law, and this confounded cousin of mine isn't worth the penalty. Leave me to deal with George."

Jimmy stepped closer to his cousin, looking steadily into the latter's blazing eyes.

"Sam has already done what I want to do," he went on, "but I don't think it's going to alter your plans to search for diamonds, George. You'll be capable of most crimes to get diamonds, now you know they're about here somewhere. But you won't get the chance to disgrace the lot of us if I can help it. I'm the owner of the *Solar Star* and, to a certain extent, responsible for this party. If you injure or threaten one of these people again we'll march you back to the ship, to stay there under Captain Barley's orders until repairs are finished and we can get away."

Thormanson's rage threatened to choke him as he listened to his cousin's warning. Never had I seen Jimmy Wenderby so determined, however, and Tiny was eager to back him in anything that would curtail Thormanson's activities. I felt far from comfortable about the situation, because there was no knowing to what lengths he would go to get back at us. I had long known George Thormanson to be a dangerous man.

Throughout this unpleasant scene, Sally and Nina were fully occupied in attending to the giant with the wounded hand and had taken no part in the proceedings. Now we turned to lend our assistance, and the scene awaiting us had its amazing as well as an amusing side. The giants were making great efforts to bring relief to the wounded man but, even so, he might have bled to death, according to our time scale, before anything was done about it. With slow, graceful movements, one big fellow was stepping out toward a wide opening at the base of the rocks, and as he went through all the motions of running he crooned away in a vast voice which brought others out of the place at what was probably their idea of a full gallop.

Nina and Sally were doing their best to

(*please turn over*)

6 DANGERS

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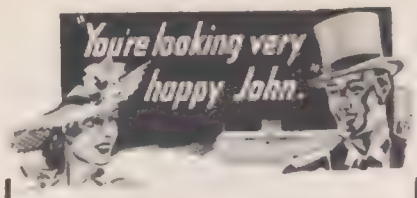

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staunch the flow of blood, but lack of the necessary bandages made things difficult. So I ran on toward the opening in the rocks, with the idea of speeding up the rescue party, and it was at the very entrance to this place that I ran headlong into a wondrous figure, just as it was nicely balanced on one foot. But it was I who fell down as a result of the impact, and felt a perfect fool as I sprawled on the ground.

When I had scrambled to my feet again I saw, staring down at me in fear and amazement, a face with beauty such as held me breathless. I stood there and stared because I just couldn't help myself. It was the distant and urgent voice of Sally Alton that brought me to my senses. There being no time for good manners, I grabbed a leafy bundle from a big, but lovely hand and ran back to Sally.

Just as I reached her, a great hand caught me by the scruff of the neck, while another gently but firmly relieved me of my bundle. This was unrolled very slowly until Sally interfered to speed things up a bit and finally she uncovered a first-aid kit that was entirely new to me. There was a long, narrow roll of yellow material, thin, moist and resilient, which I saw was made from leaves joined together at the ends by a natural gum. When the bundle was straightened out, there lay in the centre a small parcel of leaves which held a queer greenish compound I rightly took to be ointment.

One of the giants now took over the task of bandaging and I realised that all my haste and anxiety were quite unnecessary. There was plenty of blood lost, of course, but a glance at the attendant giants showed that they were not in the least perturbed by the injury. They set about bandaging the wound in their own time and fashion, which was far too long a process for my patience. Moreover, I was still concerned with the memory of a beautiful face I had glimpsed, for a few moments, outside the opening in the rocks. When I looked again in that direction, the lady herself was still on her way towards us.

For there could be no mistake in this case. Slowly approaching us, with all the grace of a huge Greek goddess, was a woman of Ooloom—the first we encountered. She came on towards us very slowly and with great deliberation, but—believe me!—she was worth waiting for. I found myself breathing a trifle short as she gradually drew nearer. Her appearance just then is not easy to describe.

I had the impression of a statue removed from some lofty pedestal and, by a miracle, animated with the breath of life to set her moving with tentative steps on her first journey. Her figure was perfect in its feminine curves and proportions, a startling example of size combined with easy, graceful movement. In height she was slightly shorter than the seven-foot males of her people, but still the tallest woman I had ever seen. And yet everything about her seemed to be in harmony. It was strange, because you quickly found yourself accepting this slow motion progress as quite natural.

Her wonderful beauty, the serenity depicted upon pale, ageless features attracted and held my close attention. It was a face oval in shape, with a high forehead above which rose a writhing pile of silver-white hair wound round the head and plaited in a series of lessening coils. The eyes were blue-grey, large and fine, set wide apart; the mouth firm and well-shaped, despite its size. About the chin was character as well as firmness and determination.

There was about this face, too, a suggestion of wisdom and experience. This last seemed strange, since there were no lines—none of the familiar ravages of time, of suffering to account for it. You may think it unnatural, perhaps, but it was impossible even to hazard a guess at this woman's age. She was, in fact, the most remarkable woman I had yet seen, and something more than mere curiosity was with me when we finally stood face to face.

I suppose admiration must have shown itself in every line of my face at that moment. Anyway, she seemed to recognise it and smiled shyly. But when she shifted her gaze to the others, I saw a queer change of expression and looked round to find the cause. Tiny Milton was staring at her with something akin to awe and adoration. There followed, in

fact, a short but distinct pause, a few moments of silence, and the colour was mounting slowly over her pale face before she finally turned her head away. Thormanson seemed struck the same way, although his eyes were harder as he stared at her openly.

There followed a lengthy conversation between the giants, obviously about ourselves, and the air was filled with their long-drawn vowel sounds. In the meantime, Eenoon—our first acquaintance in this strange country—had completed his journey and joined his friends. While he was saying his piece, I looked round for the others.

Jimmy Wenderby was also registering his admiration for the big goddess while Sally seemed anxious to divert his attention. There seemed nobody about to teach Tiny his manners, however, for he was still paying silent homage to the lady of Ooloom. Just then, a sharp elbow was jammed in my ribs and there was Nina following the direction of my gaze.

"What's her name, Sam?" she asked, rather anxiously, I thought. I noticed her use of the christian name, too, and felt rather hopeful about the future.

To satisfy Nina I stepped forward, pointed to myself and said:

"S-a-a-a-a-m."

That did it!

The lady smiled so slowly and sweetly that I blushed. Yes, I blushed—which is damned strange if you knew the truth about me. I watched the lady's head tilt backward. . . .

"A-a-a-a-a-n-e-e-e . . ." she sang. Instinctively, I turned to Tiny for the interpretation.

I saw him draw a deep breath as she neared the finishing-post. "Aaneen," he decided at last, "and it's a lovely name."

We didn't argue the point with him, for at that moment, something happened which puzzled us all. Aaneen suddenly became the central figure in a circle of men and, at a sign from Eenoon, she stared steadily back at him. Eenoon approached her until they were quite close to each other and his eyes became set and intent as he stared. For a short time they stood thus in utter silence, and presently Aaneen nodded her lovely head as one who had grasped what was required of her. Then her hand stretched out towards me, who happened to be the nearest and, without thinking, I raised mine to meet it. My hand was caught in a grip from which there was no escape. That grip suggested reserves of strength I did not care to contemplate. So we moved away together very slowly.

"Don't stand there grinning," I growled to the others. "We're going places. Come on!"

I don't like to think about how long it took us to reach our destination. We went first to the mouth of the cave where I had first bumped into Aaneen, and she brought me along by the hand, like a nurse teaching an infant how to walk. The others were still grinning, when I looked round at them. Even George Thormanson smiled grimly. I guess we made a queer picture. She wouldn't release my hand, anyway, and I saw that the others were being gently shepherded behind me by Eenoon and one of his pals. Once I heard a scuffle and a burst of laughter. I looked round in time to see Jimmy Wenderby grabbed by the collar and lifted clean off his feet by Eenoon, as he tried to wander away.

Inside the cave was a dim twilight which faded away to utter darkness in the farther depths, and near the entrance we sat down on heavy wooden stools to our first meal since leaving the ship. The food was already prepared for us on a long, low table of the same polished wood as the stools. Even the plates were square slabs of polished wood, heavy and hard, and upon these were fish of the trout variety. There were wooden beakers, also hand-carved and highly polished, set beside each plate and filled with a thick, creamy milk very pleasant to the taste.

Not until I saw food, did I realise I was really hungry and not until I was ready to eat, did I notice there were no utensils such as knives, forks and spoons. Instead, beside each polished slab was set a thin, pointed sliver of wood. We all appeared to remember our table-manners then and waited patiently for the Ooloomians to seat themselves and show us how to handle that sliver of wood. They proved to be neat and handy tools, which slit open a fish as easily as any knife, but here I have to record that the people of Ooloom were, for the most part, content to eat with their fingers.

Throughout that meal we followed the example set by our hosts as closely as possible. There were wooden finger-bowls filled with water, however, and napkins which I recognised as those same leaves they used for bandages. The fish course

was followed by small cubes of white meat which tasted something like veal.

With all our efforts at good manners I think we surprised our hosts by the quantity of food we consumed. We all expected to see these big people maintain their huge bodies with meals in proportion to size. Instead, all of us from the *Solar Star*, including Nina and Sally, must have eaten at least three times as much food as the Ooloomians. The big people stared in astonishment at the extent of our appetites.

After the meat course came three ladies to wait upon us with little cups of what looked like red syrup. We were content to study the ladies first, however, and while Hollywood must have gone crazy over any one of them there were none quite so lovely as Aaneen who dined with us. Not until I saw Eenoon sip the red syrup did I take a chance, but when I had the full flavour of it my portion was gone in a moment.

That syrup was everything I had ever thought about in the way of nectar—sweet, with a tart flavour which tickled the palate and begged for more. When I found courage to push my cup forward, suggestively, I saw a startled expression gradually appear in the blue eyes of the lady who served me. I looked across at Eenoon, in time to see an expression of warning in his big eyes. He began to wave his hand round his head in small circles and, as he did so, it suddenly dawned upon me that I was feeling fine.

There was an inward glow, a pleasant buzzing and a feeling of well-being which was strangely familiar. I looked at Tiny Milton and his eyes were shining like stars. Jimmy Wenderby was smiling like a man at peace with all the world. I saw George Thormanson smile and nod towards the lovely Aaneen and so far forget his grievances as to begin a confidential conversation with his cousin. I hesitated to believe it, but my own happy state could no longer be mistaken.

We were all lit up!

Gently but firmly, I pushed that little wooden cup away from me. One more dose of that and the band would play.

"Leave that red stuff alone, boys," I urged. "It's dynamite!"

"I know," Jimmy sighed, "and if only we were safe aboard the *Solar Star* I'd risk the explosion."

"Why did they bring us here?" questioned Sally Alton, sleepily.

"Yes, why?" yawned Nina.

Tiny Milton came out of his reverie at these questions. "They've already made up their minds about us," he said. "You saw what happened between Eenoon and Aaneen before they brought us here."

"You mean when they stared at each other?" I asked.

"Yes. I'm sure Eenoon gave her instructions by mental telepathy to save time in speech and Aaneen passed the message on to the women here. They must have known we were coming along, because the food was already prepared when we arrived. Don't you see that there must be a quicker method of conveying thoughts from one to another than by speech? Otherwise there would be nothing done."

"Mental telepathy!" I exclaimed. "Look here, Tiny, you seem to know more about these people and get on with them better than the rest of us. What makes them so slow?"

Tiny shook his head. "Somehow, I have strange feelings about these people," he confessed. "I've had my surprises, the same as you, but in some strange way I seem to have known them all my life—although I never knew the place existed until we drifted here. But I can't answer your question, Sam. Ask Thormanson."

There was a short silence while we all looked at George expectantly. He hesitated for a few moments and then made up his mind to talk.

"In my opinion," he began, quietly enough, "we've stumbled upon a people cut off from the rest of the world for countless centuries—cut off by impassable barriers of mountains and ice until they became only a legend to the outside world. I should imagine they were cut off, in the first place, by the same kind of internal convulsion which opened the way again only a few days ago. But their slowness of speech and movement seems quite natural. For one thing, their time scale is in keeping with conditions here in the Antarctic. Inside the Antarctic Circle are two equal periods of daylight and darkness, and each period is about six months. In other words there is a 180-day Day, and a 180-night Night.

"We have arrived here at the beginning of a daylight period lasting for six months. Just think of it! These people have a day 180 times longer than our own and not only their movements but their speech are timed accordingly. Time, as we know it, simply doesn't exist in Ooloom."

"I think you must be near the truth,"

Tiny conceded, "but what happens during six months of darkness?"

"Sleep, of course," Thormanson answered. "At least, that's my considered opinion and it accounts for many queer things about these people."

"Such as ?" Tiny urged.

"Their size, for one thing," George answered, "and their tremendous strength for another. They must have reserves of energy beyond our understanding. These people live very different lives from our own, and must have evolved on different lines for thousands of years. I believe we've come across a marvel quite unsuspected by the rest of humanity, and which will make our own world sit up and take notice when they learn about Ooloom. It's possible and quite likely, that the people here have a life-span of hundreds of years.

"Another thing, our time scale makes a lifetime something less than three-score years and ten because of the speed we have to maintain from the cradle to the grave. Throughout years of rushing from one crisis to another, with the pace increasing steadily all the time, our nervous system is bombarded night and day by noise. These are known to be the chief causes of mortality in our world. Death at an age when men and women should be in the heyday of their youth and vigour.

"Here, on the other hand, is no such thing as time to rob people of the breath of life, no noises to shock the nervous system. The result is a mind and body allowed gradually to attain maturity and to remain active for centuries."

"Don't go too near the edge, George," I protested. "It's difficult to imagine a lifetime running into centuries." And as I spoke thus I found myself staring at Aaneen.

"These ladies may be anything between twenty and thirty years of age," I said, uncertainly. "It's difficult enough to judge our own women these days, without having to gamble on the outsize specimens here."

"We can't judge age here, until we know more about the conditions," Thormanson reminded. "There are no signs which we can recognise to denote the passage of time. But the real tragedy of it all is that we'll never be able to find out, unless—but I don't suppose you fellows would stand for it."

"Stand for what?" Jimmy asked quickly.

"I'm wondering whether you'll take what I'm going to say seriously," Thormanson went on. "You know, I feel sure I'm right about some of the conditions. Milton has already given us the clue—I mean the mind-reading they practise in place of speech. Have any of you considered why Milton found out before the rest of us? You haven't? Well, he understood what was happening because he, among all the rest of us, is attuned and the nearest in nature to these Ooloomians. If we're ever to learn the history and customs of these people it will be through Milton's mind. Milton and I are not friends, but if he'll consent to follow my instructions I believe we'll learn something."

There was a short silence while Tiny stared at the man we knew he hated.

"What, exactly, is on your mind, Thormanson?" he demanded at last.

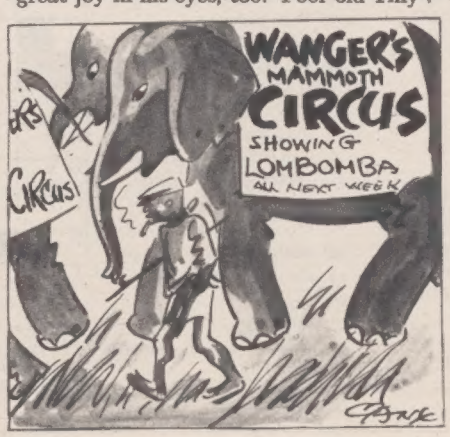
"I'll show you," George said quickly and, taking Tiny by the arm, led him to a stool next to the one upon which Aaneen sat. "Now look straight into her eyes, Milton. She'll understand. Look straight into her eyes and try to keep your mind free from all thought."

Tiny obeyed him and, unwillingly, the colour mounted to his cheeks as he stared at Aaneen. She, on her part, did not hesitate for a moment. I saw Eenoon and the rest lean slowly forward on their stools and then the experiment claimed my undivided attention. Aaneen's eyes seemed to glow with that same inward fire as she stared at Tiny Milton and, gradually, his eyes became set in a fixed stare. Her efforts became intensified and I realised that this business of mind-reading required great mental powers which affected the physical strength.

A few minutes passed and she began to relax like one exhausted. Then her gaze shifted, her head drooped as the mental strain ceased. Tiny Milton remained rigid on his stool for so long after the ordeal that I began to feel alarmed. At last, he sighed deeply and slumped on the stool, like a tired man. Thormanson, who had never left his side throughout the experiment, bent over Tiny anxiously.

"What happened, Milton?"

Tiny raised his head and one glance at him told me that the experiment had been successful. I seemed to recognise a great joy in his eyes, too. Poor old Tiny!



He was never the same man again after that first experiment with Aaneen.

"Something did happen," he said, unsteadily, "and what I know now concerns nobody but myself . . . and another."

"But surely it wasn't all personal," Thormanson argued. "She—did she tell you about—about her people, or the? . . . How did she put it over, anyway?"

"It was very difficult at first," Tiny told us. "Something set my mind on the necessity for making a great effort. There were no words, if you can understand me—only thoughts—pictures! I tell you there was a band of vapour connecting us, and over that band I felt strength pouring into me. Pictures began to take shape in my mind. There were other things that passed between us that no decent man would talk about and it's none of your business, anyway!"

"Don't get excited," Thormanson begged. "There was something else?"

I was puzzled over Thormanson's solicitude, but too interested in what Tiny had to say to remark upon it.

"They intend to take us to a strange place beyond this cave," Tiny said, slowly. "I've seen it—in my mind. The place is tall as a cathedral, with light pouring straight down into a small pool of water—blue water. Everybody has to look into that pool before they see someone who may be a kind of king here. I'm not sure about his status. He's the boss, anyway, and he stays at some distance from this place.

"The only other idea I had was for Sam Killick. I think Eenoon wants to put something over on Sam and he intends to have a go at it when we get to the pool. Aaneen likes Sam, but she—she. . . . There's no more. No more, I tell you!"

That last sentence was uttered in rising tones and I stood up to calm Tiny. He certainly wasn't himself. Before I could reach Tiny, however, Aaneen took him by the hand, almost lifted him to his feet, and then we began a slow journey deeper into the cavern.

We walked in darkness for some distance, and then came the twilight again—gradually increasing until through the shadows I saw that we followed a smooth road in a wide passage between walls of porous rock. Through light and darkness we passed, with the light streaming through crevices in the roof of the tunnel, until it ceased, at last, at the mouth of yet another cavern. And it was the place Tiny had described!

The cavern was lofty as a cathedral, with rocks rising in tall columns here and there almost to the roof. Never have I seen such a weird place anywhere else in the world. It was a cavern of vast size—the result of a volcanic explosion in the long ago, Thormanson afterwards told me—with walls of living rock twisted and grained in fantastic shapes. Standing there among so many giants under a roof so high that it was shrouded in shadow, I felt very small indeed. We walked in single file through this place to about its centre, which was no great distance from the entrance although it took us a long time to get there.

From somewhere high above our heads, a shaft of light streamed downward directly into a small pool of still water—water blue as a summer sky. At the edge of the pool, we halted and formed a circle, and then I noticed that the lighting in this queer place made the water a perfect mirror. I also saw that this blue water held a strange quality which made your reflection a mere background. Over the face of my own reflection, for example, I saw shadows gathering and taking shape. Then somebody placed two great hands on my shoulders and twisted me round, and I found myself staring straight into the wide, blue eyes of Eenoon.

I saw his eyes widen as I looked back at him, dilate until they were replicas of the blue mirror at our feet. Some strange power was sapping my vitality so that resistance ebbed under the spell of Eenoon's eyes. Presently, although no word passed between us, I felt impelled to gaze downwards into the water. The idea of Truth as a tangible thing—as an entity—obsessed me. I looked down into the blue water, without conscious effort, and this is what I saw. . . .

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Get rid of it quickly with Vapex. Breathe the pleasant, refreshing vapour which penetrates to the innermost passages of nose and throat, easing the breathing, relieving any headache or stuffiness and killing the germs at their source. Vapex is perfectly safe for children—guaranteed free from ephedrine or any narcotic.

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12 ft.	8 ft.	7 ft.	£5 10 0	10/8

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12 ft.	8 ft.	8 ft.	£6 10 0	11/11

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that stands for Honesty,
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You'll find it in the market place
If you stick to advertised goods.

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Every article advertised in "THE PASSING SHOW" is covered by a "Cash Refund" guarantee. Every care is taken that only the advertisements of reputable traders shall appear, but should you, in spite of this, find reasonable cause for complaint in any manufactured goods purchased through our columns, please let us know. Any complaint must reach us within one month of the advertisement appearing in "THE PASSING SHOW" and, in the case of dispute, the decision of our Managing Director shall be final.

ALL-ROUND VALUE ■ *AND A SQUARE GUARANTEE for a STRAIGHT LINE*

PHILIP EMANUEL, Advertisement Director.
ODHAMS PRESS LTD.
57/59, Long Acre, London, W.C.2

NEXT WEEK

We can't help feeling that it would be futile for us, at this late date, to start explaining how much we appreciate the work of Stephen Vincent Benet, for readers have already told us how greatly they value his stories.

All that is left for us to do is to tell you that his latest piece, "Not a Fighting Man," appearing next week, is the saga of Jacob, a wandering Jew with a scholar's love of books, who goes to the wide open spaces in search of freedom after one of those European tantrums that have always meant suffering for the Children of the Dispersion.

He was filled with bitterness and misery and it needed a disturbing, bewitching look in the eyes of a lovely maiden as she glanced from him to Meyer Kappelhuist, who had shoulders the size of a barn door, and back again to his inelegant clothes to make him realise that even though Koheleth was a great preacher, he might have been a more cheerful man if he had had a good wife.

You can guess the rest of the story. For it deals with the creating of a hero. The great difference is that it is told in the incomparable manner of Stephen Vincent Benet, being full of his wit and wisdom.

Knowing the puckish twist of mind that leads Longshanks into the most incredible escapades, you will probably be quite prepared to hear that he has become entangled with a tallboy, a valuable scrap of antiquity that graced a junk stall at a church bazaar.

Because he has never learned to refuse help, even to the most unworthy, Longshanks found himself in charge of this stall and, instead of attending to business in the good, old fashioned way, he gave himself to the unravelling of a deep laid plot to rob a bunch of innocent villagers.

And we must say he looks rather grand when he sets himself up as the man to put things right. Anyway, Francis Foster tells you all about it when he continues the adventures of his happy wanderers.

Among the other features will be a Belvedere Tipp story showing how the head of Delicate Missions, Ltd., stirred up a Mayor's nest. It needed all of A. R. V. Nelson Smith's ingenuity to get him out of the mayor's parlour without loss of life or limb. And then, of course, we have the second adventure of "Elizabeth in Africa."

YOU'RE TELLING US!

YOU'RE TELLING US! Half a guinea is paid for each letter or quotation printed on this page. Address: "Readers' Letters," "Passing Show," 93 Long Acre, London, W.C.2. Please state whether Mr., Mrs., or Miss

Although we have long since had a deep down suspicion that life was keeping something back from us, it was not until we heard from Mr. Oscar Wood, of Bellshill, Lanarkshire, Scotland, that we realised how we had been duly hornswoggled. And now we feel that it is too late to do anything about it.

For having reached that decadent time of life when we can't even understand a man with the price of a pair of pyjamas in his pocket wanting to go to a night club, we feel that we are no longer in a position to deal worthily with the most tender theme of all.

Yet in our old age we have been intrigued by the curiosity that prompted Mr. Wood to ask us "why a woman closes her eyes when you kiss her."

We would have merely blamed our whiskers and passed on had not Mr. Wood also added, "I do not mean that women close their eyes when you yourself kiss them; but that any woman closes her eyes when she is kissed. The fact cannot be disputed.

"Recently I have noticed this phenomenon on three different occasions. Each of the girls I kissed, shut her eyes. I am not much to look at, but I can't be so bad as all that. Possibly Uncle Joe, with all his prime experience. . . ."

We knew we never could answer Mr. Wood's question without giving over this space to the most astonishing ribaldry, but we felt we ought to check up on the facts so that we might return to the sanctum without being irritated by beguiling thoughts.

We sent, therefore, for Alfred, knowing full well that life has recently blossomed into something expensive for him by the shine on his hair and the twinkle in his eye. Also, he has taken to wearing a tie.

"Blimey," he said, "Fancy askin' you a question like that. Wouldn't believe it, would yer, an' you with all them whiskers, if you know what I mean. Still, I suppose he's right. Anyway, I think he's right, and I daresay I could

let you know for certain in the morning. That's if you want any 'elp, sir."

And with a naughty look in his eye that left us slightly bewildered, he was gone.

So, in the interest of our readers, Alfred, the office boy whose slaying facetiae chills the most hard boiled intruder, marches on to perdition. If he comes back alive, we may even tell you all about it; that is if there is anything to tell that we think you don't know already.

For we have the most suspicious minds these days, what with these chameleon-like robins' eggs, religious hobgoblins and the like. We even went so far as to doubt the wisdom of Mrs. A. de S. G., of West Drayton, Middlesex, when she was inspired to warn us about Miss Twopenny Coloured who became Mrs. Penny Plain for love of a man.

"Girls who are still in the hunting stage and spinsters beyond it, always saying commiseratingly, 'how she has gone off since she married,'" she explains. "They firmly believe that once a girl has hooked her man she ceases to be troubled about her looks or her clothes. How surprised they would be to learn the Awful Truth that the married woman soon finds out that although a man likes to be around

with and even allows himself to be caught by Miss Twopenny Coloured he prefers her to be Mrs. Penny Plain as soon as they are married. For the simple reason that:

He hates being kept waiting
He likes to kiss his wife without running the risk of being scarred by lipstick or being scolded for disturbing her make-up
He objects to being stared at by a lot of louts with that 'my-there's-a-high-stepper-look in their eyes, and
He can't get over the expense of beauty treatment.

"So don't be taken in by any more of these girls who write to tell you why men prefer highly coloured companions."

Having started out by doubting, we feel still a trifle dubious about this worldly explanation of something of which we never dared to think. Actually, there are really more intriguing things to keep us pleasantly comatose than to wonder just when Aunt Agatha first began to develop that bathycolpian and steatopygous—see how polite we are—look with which she puts nature to shame.

Among the aforementioned problems is the bizarre jest of the gods that led Mr. Ernest Dobson, of Streatham, London, S.W.16, to think that we are interested in martyrs.

"Perhaps you can tell me why men die for their principles," he says. "It seems that a man who dies, horribly, at the stake, is either a noble creature who prefers a few hours of misery to an eternity of simmering in a cauldron of boiling pitch or a stubborn heretic, better dead than causing trouble. Yet I can't see the difference.

"Through some horrid twist of fate, probably caused by constantly reading your page, I think the man was just an ass whichever way you look at it. But it doesn't really matter much, does it? None of us seems likely to die of anything more terrifying than old age."

And we don't even give a hoot for old age, Mister Dobson!

For Your Amusement

CLUES ACROSS

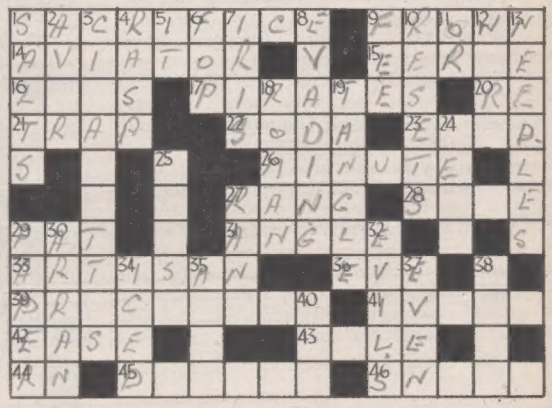
1. This was made on ancient altars.
9. Severe look.
14. He is accustomed to great heights.
15. May arouse dread.
16. Means of locomotion.
17. Bold bad men.
20. Brief reference.
21. Vehicle or maybe snare.
22. Alkaline substance.
23. Lengthened.
26. Very small.
27. Tinkled or perhaps made louder sound.
28. Seer disturbed and probably dry.
29. Light smack.
31. A bend.
33. Skilful sort of fellow.
36. Before the morrow.
39. An instructor.
41. Covered with a creeper.
42. Comfort.
43. Look in certain manner.
44. One of the forces.
45. Removed specks of matter.
46. Unpleasant aspect.

Q	U	A	D	■	S	U	P	P	E	R	■	S	O	■
U	R	A	L	■	A	R	G	E	N	T	■	■	■	■
E	A	G	E	R	■	B	R	I	G	A	R	■	■	■
S	T	E	A	D	I	N	G	■	S	■	P	R	O	P
T	O	R	M	E	N	T	■	M	■	P	O	L	L	■
■	■	N	■	E	N	T	O	M	B	■	B	E	L	L
H	E	A	R	T	E	N	■	P	E	A	L	■	A	■
I	M	P	■	R	E	E	F	■	A	R	E	A	S	■
R	E	A	L	■	N	■	D	O	O	R	■	R	U	E
E	N	C	A	S	E	■	E	R	A	S	■	R	■	■
S	T	E	P	■	D	I	N	E	R	■	B	E	A	T

Solution to last week's puzzle.

CLUES DOWN

1. For smelling, perhaps.
2. Declare
3. May end in smoke.
4. Grate.
5. Half mite.
6. Vain persons.
7. Pupil of a kind.
8. Dodging.
9. May be paid or possibly due.
10. Arranges again.
11. Tail of 39 across.
12. Wrath in drawn metal.
13. For sewing.
18. Citizen of ancient Empire.
19. Matted or knotted state.
24. Sharp.
25. Degrade.
27. Wild talk.
29. This appears on such material.
30. Scottish isle.
32. Bad things.
34. Sugar covered.
35. Peas tossed about.
37. Divisible by two without remainder.
38. Implies little consequence.
40. Used for castigation



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L.S. 4

P.S. GOLDEN CIRCLE 16-7-38

SIR CURTIS LAMPSON BART.

THE FAMOUS CENTRAL AFRICAN EXPLORER

Completely Restored after Nervous Breakdown accompanied by Loss of Vitality, Insomnia and Stomach Trouble Resulting from Jungle Fever and Malaria, by

DR. PAULIN'S VITAMINA

FREE TRIAL SUPPLY OFFERED — *POST FORM BELOW*

Sir Curtis to-day. *Photo: Elliott and Fry, Ltd.*

Sir Curtis Lampson in Central African Jungle and (below)–In the hands of the "Leopard" Society handling a deadly "fetish" snake.

24 Clapton Road,
High Road N.,
Tottenham.

Dear Sirs,

Chiefly due to conditions encountered in French Central Africa, I sustained a complete breakdown, the aftermath of Jungle Fever and Malaria, with consequent loss of Vitality, Insomnia, and terrible stomach trouble, which necessitated my being under a Doctor for months.

Some months ago, at the suggestion of a friend, I tried "Vitamina." Frankly, the result was striking. All of the above three symptoms have disappeared and I appear to be again normal.

I am so delighted with the results that I am willing to allow you to publish my letter, together with the enclosed photograph. I feel that every-body should know what wonderful healing properties "Vitamina" unquestionably possesses.

Faithfully yours,
CURTIS G. LAMPSON.

NERVES *Control your* LIFE

Night and Day Nerves Maintain Your Breathing, Heart Beat, Blood Pressure, Digestion, Temperature

THE DR. PAULIN, M.D., B.Sc., TREATMENT WILL GIVE YOU

NEW YOUTH AT ANY AGE

Readers of "Passing Show" to participate in Free Testing Distribution of VITAMINA, the Source of Mental and Physical Energy.

WHEN the Blood-stream becomes loaded with the sticky products of faulty assimilation and toxic poisons, it resists the efforts of the Heart to force it round; the Heart in consequence is overtaxed, leading to Blood-pressure and a general insufficiency of food to the whole system.

This food deficiency extends to all the tissues, including the skin, causing it to shrivel and wrinkle and bring about (often very prematurely) that dreaded condition we call "Old Age."

Vitamina introduces Vitamins and Mineral Salts into the Blood-stream in the correct proportions found in Nature, thereby restoring the balance between the Alkaline and Acid Salts and rendering the blood beautifully *clean and fluid*. This improved *Fluidity* at once enables the Heart to circulate it, without effort, into the furthermost tissues and automatically build up Strong Nerves and Radiant Health.

Dr. Paulin's 5 Points

1. "Vitamina" may be defined as the crystalline form of elements which Plants and Fruits extract from the soil and convert into vitalising Mineral Salts and Vitamins.

2. "Vitamina" has the wonderful property of enabling the Digestive Tract to extract 30 per cent. more nutriment from food.

3. "Vitamina" is NOT A DRUG, but a natural food of the highest value.

4. "Vitamina" gives a very fluid and penetrating quality to the blood.

5. By penetrating every organ and tissue in the body, it completely rejuvenates the whole system and removes the "cause" of all nerve troubles.

All France knows Dr. Paulin, as does the medical Profession throughout the world. Pupil and personal friend of the great Professor Berthelot, he was entrusted to carry on the Professor's life work.

Dr. Paulin sprang into international fame in 1914, when his discovery of painless childbirth was presented before the Academy of Medicine and acclaimed in the "Lancet," the principal medical journal in England.

Since then, discovery has followed discovery, his latest being the new VITAMINA treatment for all Nervous Troubles.

AMAZING EXPERIENCE OF MISS HELEN STANLEY (Hospital Nurse)

Nurse Stanley

COMPLETE BREAKDOWN AND NERVOUS EXHAUSTION

Cambridge.

Dear Sirs,

Overwork, long hours with insufficient sleep, and irregular meals combined to lower my vitality and powers of resistance to such an extent that I was reduced to a mental and physical wreck.

"Vitamina" has completely restored my health, and in spite of prolonged bouts of night duty, I am retaining my vitality and "power to do."

I cannot thank you enough for giving me my health, and enabling me to again earn my living.

Yours gratefully,
(Signed) Nurse Helen Stanley.

You are Cordially Invited to Test Free of Charge Dr. Paulin's Supreme Nerve Restorer, Health Invigorator and Rejuvenator.

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SEND FOR FREE TRIAL

Supply and let VITAMINA put you right
POST TO-DAY

To Dr. Paulin, Ludgate House, Fleet Street, London, E.C.4.

Please send me Free Testing Supply of Vitamina, together with explanatory literature and full particulars.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

.....

I am suffering from.....

.....

Enclose 3d. in stamps for packing and postage. P.S. I6/7/38

PERSONAL ADVICE

If you feel unwell or even seedy, write to Dr. Paulin Preparations, Ludgate House, Fleet Street, London, E.C.4, state your symptoms. You will receive advice that will cost you nothing, but will probably open the door to a new life of Health and Happiness.

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The illustration below shows a retailer's cottage premises in the little village of Cockfield, Suffolk. Player's Navy Cut Cigarettes can be purchased here, as in many similar picturesque and remote spots all over the country.

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PLAYER'S MILD NAVY CUT CIGARETTES are not so well known as the popular Medium Navy Cut Cigarettes, but if your taste is for a mild and very smooth smoke, ask for Player's "MILD." An old-established brand, the prices are the same as for "Medium."

Player's Please

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PLAYER'S NAVY CUT CIGARETTES · "MEDIUM" OR "MILD" · PLAIN OR CORK-TIPPED · 10 FOR 6D 20 FOR 11½D

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